

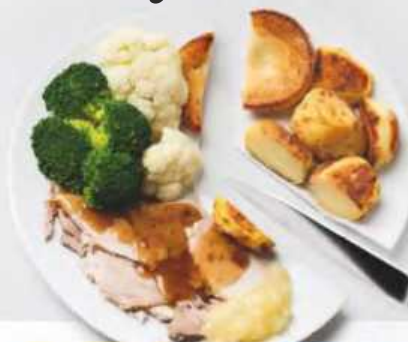
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Thursday December 10, 2015

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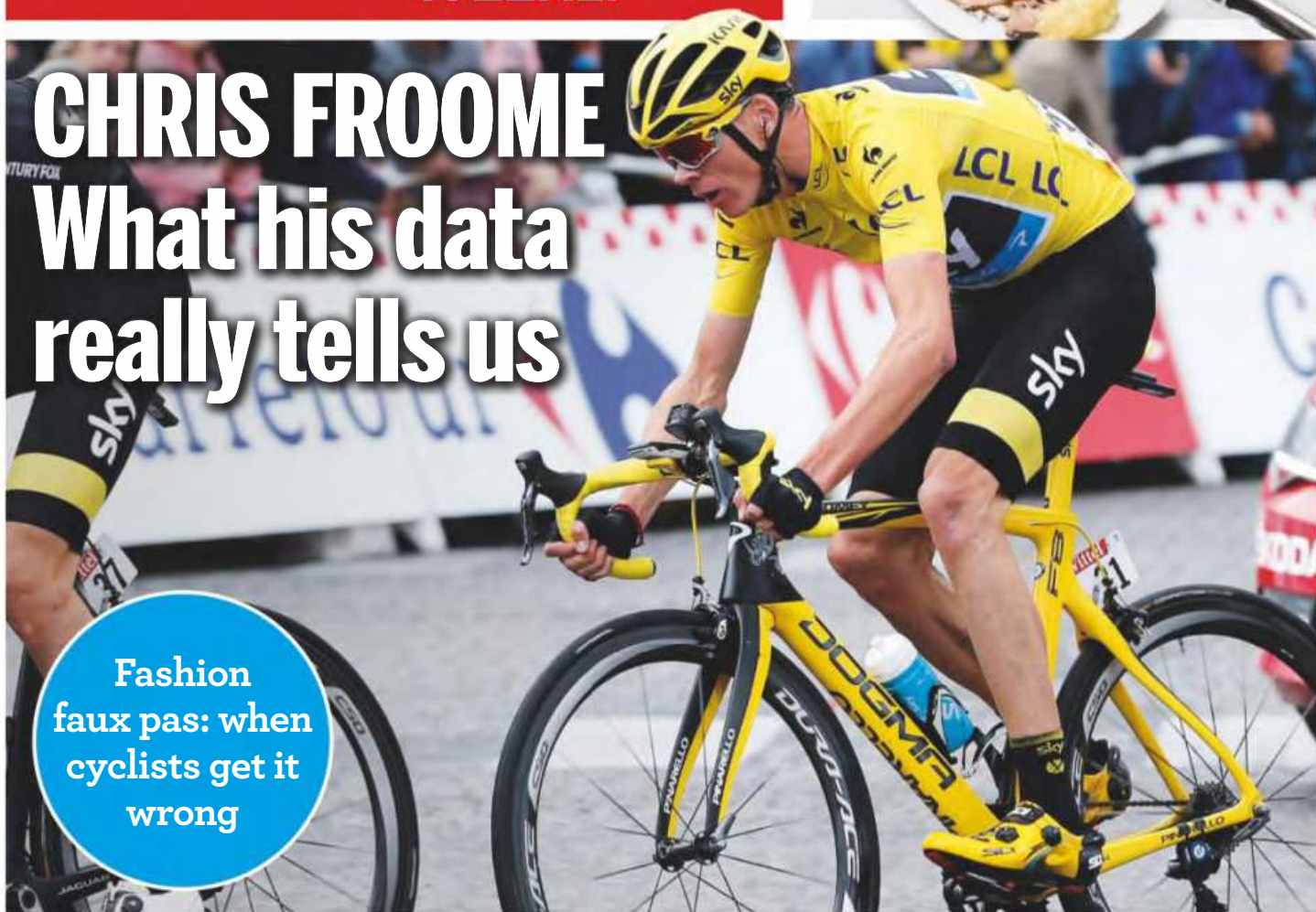
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## CHRIS FROOME

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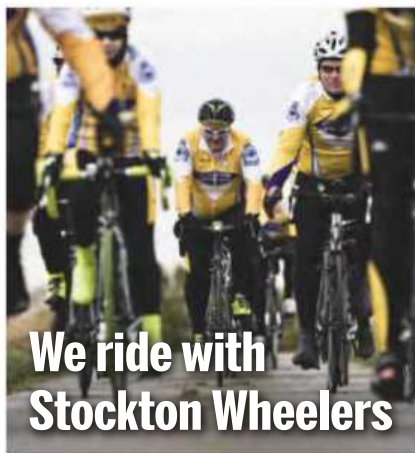


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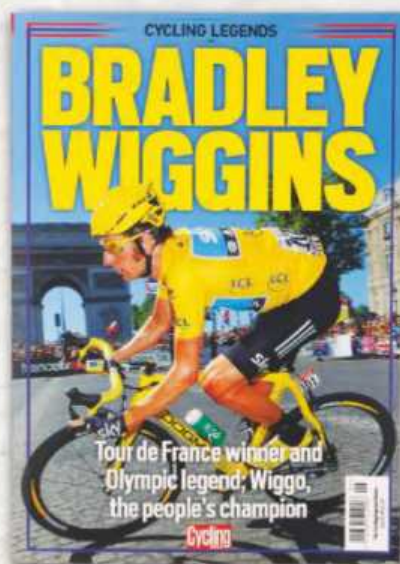
# BRITISH CYCLING LEGEND

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# THIS ISSUE 10/12

## Froome can't win

**I** hope you now all know your V02 max from your Watts per kilogram and peak power. The coverage that Chris Froome's physiological data has received over the last week has been the biggest advert for sports science since the invention of the heart-rate monitor.

Froome said during the 2015 Tour de France that he'd look into releasing some data after overt accusations of foul play in the French press led to hostile treatment from some roadside fans. Sky riders were punched, booed and Froome even had to suffer a cup of urine being thrown at him.

Good to his word, Froome has now revealed what he is capable of. The numbers make for interesting reading, but unfortunately for Froome all it proves is that he is an incredible athlete. As two-time winner of the most gruelling sporting event on the planet, that's hardly a surprise.

What it can't prove, and it never could, is that Froome is clean. You can't, after all, prove a negative. He may have to wait years for everyone to believe him as only a retrospective assessment of his biological data throughout his career, and lack of failed tests, will prove he is true to his word that his results will stand the test of time.

For Froome, I fear that he and his achievements will only truly be recognised years after he retires.



Simon Richardson  
Editor

Photos: Chris Auld, Graham Watson



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# Froome data: critics still want more

## Independent test results elicit a mixed response

Richard Abraham

**T**he long-awaited results of Chris Froome's physiological testing were released last week. However, the unveiling has done little to silence his critics in the way the Sky rider hoped it might do.

Froome underwent independent testing at the GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) laboratory in Brentford, Middlesex, last August, three weeks after his second overall victory at the Tour de France.

It was a victory that was dogged by scepticism, with calls for Froome and Sky to release his physiological data to prove his credibility.

In response to those calls for data, the results and analysis of the tests were released in an article in *Esquire* magazine, written by author and journalist Richard Moore, online last Friday and in print on Monday.

In the article, Phillip Bell, a scientist at the GSK laboratory who conducted the tests, described Froome's maximum rate of oxygen uptake of 84.6ml/kg/min (or 88.2 when adjusted to take into account his Tour de France weight) as being "close to what we believe are the upper limits for VO2 peak in humans."

However, any hope that the release would put an end to suspicions of doping was short-lived. Froome's Sky boss Sir Dave Brailsford said last week that no amount of data would be able to prove Froome's credibility.

"You can never stop every single doubter," Brailsford said. "However, there's no harm in trying."

Antoine Vayer, the former Festina team trainer who is now one of

Froome's most outspoken critics, told *Esquire* that he remained unconvinced.

Moore told *Cycling Weekly*: "People who have had their minds made up about Froome will not have their minds changed [by the data]. People who believe that Froome is clean will probably feel some reassurance, and people that are open-minded will remain open-minded."

Philippe Brunel, cycling journalist at French sports newspaper *L'Equipe*, told *CW* that Froome's data would not change the general climate of suspicion around cycling.

"I don't think the public at the Tour de France had anything against Froome in particular," he said. "I think there is a more general and more vague problem that relates to the credibility of cycling. Whoever wins the Tour becomes emblematic of cycling, so if it was Froome or whoever else winning, there would always be those suspicions."

### Response to suspicion

Froome and his Sky team-mates were physically and verbally abused during this year's Tour, with one spectator emptying a cup of urine on the yellow jersey. In response to suspicion of Froome's performance on the race's first summit finish, where he rode away from his rivals to La Pierre Saint Martin on stage 10, Sky released some of Froome's performance data from the climb on the race's second rest day.

It was during that final week of the 2015 Tour, when calls for Froome's physiological data were at their loudest, that Froome's wife Michelle asked GSK to conduct independent tests.

Twenty-one days after the Tour finished, while weighing slightly more than his Tour weight and fatigued from the race and the post-Tour criterium circuit, Froome underwent a body composition scan and two submaximal efforts (in hot and cold conditions) to measure his sustainable power, with a VO2 max test in between.

Moore acknowledged that the data would not prove Froome's credibility but believed Froome was also interested in what they would reveal about his physiology.

"If there is a spin-off effect of boosting his profile and proving that he's clean, that's good, but he wouldn't have done it if that was the only reason to do it," Moore said. "He is genuinely interested in learning more about his body to make improvements and to become a better rider. That's a big focus for him."

The *Esquire* article also revealed data from a physiological test that Froome took when he rode at the World Cycling Centre in 2007, a year before turning professional. It was interpreted as demonstrating Froome's physiological abilities had not improved dramatically in recent years (see page 8).

Data from two blood tests in 2015 — on July 13, the day before his stage 10 win and from August 18, the day after the GSK tests — were also revealed.

"In attempting to answer them, Froome has invited more questions," said Moore. "If Froome had just blanked it and stonewalled it from the start, people would have got bored and stopped asking about it. The more you reveal, the more people want you to reveal."



A full-page background image of Chris Froome in his yellow Tour de France jersey, riding a road bike. He is wearing a yellow helmet and sunglasses, looking down at the handlebars. The background is slightly blurred, showing a race environment with other riders and spectators.

# Froome's key data

**84.6ml/kg/min**

VO2 max (the body's ability to transport oxygen)

**419W**

20-40 minute sustained power

**67kg**

Tour de France weight

**6.25W/kg**

Power output per kilogram at Tour de France weight

**525W**

Peak power (during VO2 max test)

## MY VIEW...

### Richard Abraham

*Cycling Weekly* news writer

Physiological tests are no indicator of how riders perform on the open road, and we already knew Froome is an athlete with exceptionally high capabilities. He won the Tour de France twice. Crucially there is nowhere near enough data here to judge whether Froome is clean or not. As Froome knows, only more data and more information can help make that picture clearer.







# Froome's past suggests legitimate improvement

## Brit's raw talent evident from 2007 figures

Richard Abraham

**T**he publication of Chris Froome's physiological data included a test dating from 2007, when Froome was aged 22. Tracked down by Froome's wife Michelle, it shows that in 2007 Froome's VO2 max was 80.2 (compared to 84.6 in 2015) and his threshold power was 420W, one watt more than that recorded in 2015.

However Froome weighed 75.6kg and had a body fat percentage of 16.9 per cent: very high for an elite athlete. It suggests that Froome's dramatic improvement in race performances between 2007 and 2011, when he enjoyed his breakthrough ride and came second at the Vuelta a España, was down to shedding weight, learning to race, and overcoming his non-traditional route into the sport.

Doug Dailey, the former British Cycling logistics manager who first spotted Froome competing for Kenya at the 2006 Commonwealth Games, compared Froome's route into

cycling to that of Graeme Obree.

"He developed in his own little bubble and he wasn't influenced by the normal way of doing things," Dailey told *CW*.

"Tim Kerrison confided in me once that Chris was knocking out almost identical figures to Bradley Wiggins, but we just weren't seeing it reflected in performance. That's a coaching problem."

Froome also suffered from tactical naivety and a tendency to crash. Even this summer he crashed at home in Monaco shortly after the Tour while riding his road bike down to the local car wash and rolling his TT bike with him.

In March, former Sky team-mate Russell Downing told *CW* that prior to 2011, Froome struggled to find himself as a rider.

"He didn't know what he was. He was all sorts in the team: sometimes he was even the man at the start of the leadout," Downing said. "We all knew he could go really fast uphill, but I don't think he ever got that opportunity for a while."

# Tour champ's lab tests explained

Nick Bull

## What exactly did the tests consist of?

Chris Froome undertook three physical tests at the GSK Human Performance Lab, all while riding on a Pinarello bike attached to a home trainer. For the VO2 max test the bike's resistance increased every 30 seconds until Froome could no longer pedal. Submaximal tests saw Froome ride for 40 minutes, with blood taken at regular intervals. These samples provided his lactate concentration, an indicator of fatigue. Froome also underwent body composition scans for muscle and fat.

## What do the tests show?

Taken at face value, the results show Froome is an excellent elite athlete, illustrating why he rides so strongly on mountainous terrain. Nonetheless, in comparison to other athletes, English Institute of Sport physiologist Dan Henschy told *CW*: "The numbers are as you'd expect, but they're not out of this world."

## What are the limitations of the tests?

Such tests cannot prove if Froome is clean or not, nor is there any comparable data from his rivals. Furthermore, they only provide a snapshot of what Froome is capable of. Henschy added: "Froome's data are a measure of his fitness on that one day, not over a three-week race."

## What other information could Froome release?

Henschy believes further lab tests could be beneficial, based on context, saying: "If he undertook one during his off-season, one in March or April and one just before the Tour, and provided some background information about his training, a clearer picture of Froome would emerge."

## Could Froome do more lab tests?

While such undertakings aren't that expensive (especially with Froome's estimated £2m annual salary), athletes ideally need to be fresh for such tests, which impacts on training schedules. On-bike power meters now mean plenty of rider data can be accrued during training and races. Team Sky regularly collect and analyse athlete data collected this way.

## Can Froome's rivals learn anything?

Seeing Froome's numbers is one thing; doing anything with them is something else. "It's like if your car goes 50kph and mine 48... I can see how fast yours goes but I can't do anything legally to change my speed," Vincenzo Nibali's trainer Paolo Slongo told *CW*.





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# GB women miss Rio points

## Olympic qualification in jeopardy

Sophie Hurcom

**B**ritain's women's team sprint squad is in danger of not qualifying for the Rio Olympics, after they missed out on vital qualification points at the Track World Cup in Cambridge, New Zealand last weekend.

The team of Jess Varnish and Katy Marchant finished a disappointing 11th, after Marchant struggled to get onto Varnish's wheel from the start during qualifying.

However, Shane Sutton, British Cycling's technical director, blasted the UCI for allowing event volunteers — rather than team helpers — to hold up riders at the start line, which he blamed for Marchant's slow start.

"Unfortunately Katy got held [too long], never got on [Varnish's wheel] and the officials refused to override the decision. I don't think they realise the damage that's been done to us," Sutton said. "It has cost us, or made it very difficult to qualify for the Games from a team sprint perspective."

While the front starter in a team sprint is set off from an automatic gate, other team members are held up manually.

"It's pretty poor from the UCI. If we don't get that Olympic place it goes down to them using a volunteer," continued Sutton. "It's something coaches and federations have been crying out for for many years that we should be able to hold our own riders."

Sutton believes that the riders now need to place in the top four at both the next World Cup round in Hong Kong in January, and at the World Championships in London in February, which he says is "going to be a big ask".

Elsewhere, Becky James struggled on her return to racing for GB and was knocked out of the first round in the individual sprint by her team-mate Marchant.

The men's sprinters fared better, however, with the team sprint squad made up of Philip Hindes, Jason Kenny and Callum Skinner finishing fourth. Kenny then finished fifth in the keirin on Saturday, a ride Sutton was full of praise for: "It's the best we've seen Jason race in a long time," he said.



Katy Marchant chases Australia's Kaarle McCulloch in the 1/8 sprint final. She went on to finish sixth, after being knocked out in the quarters by McCulloch's team-mate Stephanie Morton



# Young endurance riders shine with triple medal haul

Team GB's young endurance squad were the surprise performers at the Track World Cup last weekend, winning all three of the team's medals.

The squad, largely comprising inexperienced Academy riders while many senior riders were rested, came away with a gold, silver and bronze.

Twenty-year-old Mark Stewart took the weekend's biggest prize, winning his first international senior gold medal in the scratch race last Saturday, before adding a bronze in the Madison with Germain Burton on the final day despite Burton crashing mid-race.

"It's lovely; you go in, no pressure," the Scot, who joined the BC Academy in 2014, told British Cycling.

"You just think, right, I'm going to do what I love doing and just ride a bike and race it. I love it."

Chris Latham also put in a fine ride in the omnium to win silver, beaten only by reigning Olympic champion, Lasse Norman Hansen of Denmark.

With Britain's first-choice omnium rider Ed Clancy out injured, and his Olympics in doubt, the performance could put Latham in contention for Rio 2016 along with Mark Cavendish.

"To run second to the Olympic champion, in a field of what I would say are high-class omnium riders, he's done really well," said British Cycling's technical director Shane Sutton. "So long as he keeps his head, I'm quite sure he'll push for Rio the way he's going, and the way he's performed here."

## MY VIEW...

### Sophie Hurcom

*Cycling Weekly* news writer

The prospect of Britain's women's team sprint squad not qualifying for Rio would be a big blow for Team GB. But while they may have been unlucky in New Zealand with their start, in reality the sprinters have been off the mark for the majority of the last two years. Top fours in the next two competitions could be a big ask.





## Sky prepare for the pavé

Ian Stannard and Luke Rowe were among the Team Sky riders who reconnoitred the Tour of Flanders and Paris-Roubaix routes last week. Nine riders — including new signing Michal Kwiatkowski — rode four hours of the Flanders course last Monday, before a smaller group tackled 90 kilometres of the Hell of the North's parcours. "It was pretty grim," said Stannard. "At this time of year [the cobbles have] got tractors and stuff running up and down them."

## CTT to reveal anti-doping findings

Cycling Time Trials (CTT) says the findings of UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) investigations into two adverse anti-doping samples taken at its events in 2015 are likely to be announced in the coming weeks. The CTT's recently released annual report for this year revealed that "one positive test" and "one possible anti-doping violation" were noted from the 44 samples collected at events. UKAD carries out tests at CTT events on behalf of the organisation.

## Cambs to stage world's biggest TT

The 2016 Tour of Cambridgeshire Chrono will set a new world record for the world's biggest ever time trial, after all 800 of its places for the 2016 event sold out in just a week. The TT, due to take place on June 4 next year as part of the two-day, UCI-accredited event for amateurs, beat the previous record of 720.

## Harris slips up in Belgian cyclo-cross

Nikki Harris (Telenet-Fidea) missed out on the podium for the first time in this year's Bpost Bank Trofee Cyclo-cross series, as she took sixth in Saturday's fourth round in Essen, Belgium. Reigning British champion Helen Wyman (Kona) placed seventh, but beat Harris into second in Sunday's Druivencross Overijse race in Flanders.

## Lizzie's home stretch at Tour de Yorks

Next year's Tour de Yorkshire is aiming to attract Lizzie Armitstead to the start line with a women's race starting in her hometown of Otley. The 2016 event will feature a 135km race (April 30) which ends in Doncaster and precedes stage two of the men's race on the same course. The three-day men's event begins on April 29 with a 184km stage from Beverley to Settle, and ends with a tough 196km leg from Middlesbrough to Scarborough. Three sportive routes will also start and finish in Scarborough ahead of the final stage on May 1.



Tour de Yorkshire: hoping to attract Armitstead

Photos: Bart Hazen

## Weekly column Rob Hayles



**"It was like trying to force two magnets of the same pole together. My right foot just didn't want to go back into the pedal"**

**T**he cyclo-cross season is well and truly upon us, and just like any other discipline in our sport, once the flag has dropped, all hell breaks loose.

Throughout my racing days, I only competed in two cyclo-cross races. My first was many moons ago, early on as a junior. The second, and last, of my cyclo-cross outings was during the last few years of my competitive career. Fortunately for me, and some others, the day was mild, dry, and the ground fairly solid; my understanding is that many out there actually prefer it cold, wet and slippery — go figure! Not only were conditions in my favour, the organisers also decided that I should have the honour of being gridded on the front row with all the 'top dogs'. This filled me with terror, as well as loading me with some very unwanted pressure. This was, after all, just supposed to be a nice little one-hour high intensity training effort under race conditions, without it feeling like I was actually racing.

### Cleat trouble

Anyway, the start went well. Much better than I anticipated, actually. I got off the line, foot clipped in pedal without slipping and banging my shin, and I held my place going into the first bend. All was going well.

Halfway round the first lap, there was a long straight into a slight uphill over two planks that required dismounting then remounting. It was at this point that my race started to unravel. It was like trying to force two magnets of the same pole together. My right foot just didn't want to go back into the pedal. Eventually I got it to engage. By which time, the lead group I had been with since the start had left me and were riding out of sight. From that moment, I was caught and passed by most of the other riders, and to add insult to injury my chain snapped on the final lap so had to run across the finish line.

I vowed never to return to a cross event. So what happened last year? My kids wanted to ride a cross race, and no doubt at some point this season we will return. Better dust off my wellies again. Unlike me, my children prefer the mud.

Former double world track champion, Rob Hayles is a pundit for TV and radio. He's also a coffee connoisseur and garden shed inventor





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## Belgian style, Scottish flavour

Last Sunday's Scottish Cyclo-cross Championships at Irvine Beach in North Ayrshire proved that it's not just the famed Koksijde cyclo-cross in Belgium that is characterised by its coastal setting, sand dunes, windy conditions and cold temperatures.

Mountain biker Grant Ferguson (Betch.NL) took victory in the men's championships, on a course known by locals as 'Joksijde'. The 22-year-old (and current under-23 British cyclo-cross champion) finished almost two and a half minutes ahead of David Lines (Velosure-Starley Primal) and last year's winner, Rob Wardell. Peebles CC's Lucy Grant was the fastest woman; only three seconds separated Anne Ewing in silver and Jane Barr in bronze.

Photo: Anthony Robson





## Happy Garner joins new team-mates in Calpe

Britain's Lucy Garner says she immediately felt at home with her new Wiggle-Honda team-mates after attending the squad's pre-season training camp in Calpe, Spain, last week.

The 21-year-old (pictured in black and green), who will switch to the British squad for next season after three years with the Dutch Liv-Plantur team, told *Cycling Weekly*: "I was a bit nervous before the camp; everything is new, I didn't know what to expect, but everybody was friendly and welcoming."

"Straight away I felt part of the team. I didn't have any doubts about my decision beforehand, and the camp showed I was right. I'm really happy that I joined."

Garner added that the focus of the camp was quality mileage — helped by sunshine and mid-teen temperatures throughout — as opposed to specific goals.

"Some of the girls would do harder efforts on the climbs, but it was more about the hours on the bike," she said. "We were doing anything between three and five hours each day."

Wiggle's 12-day camp ended on Monday. Etixx-Quick Step and Katusha are among the men's teams currently based in the Spanish coastal town in preparation for the 2016 season.







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# To do this week...

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Cyclo-cross riders have to tackle dirt roads, grass, steep hills and off-camber sections as they pass in front of Glengorm Castle, built in 1860. "This is our 10th year and it's going to be our busiest," said organiser Davie Graham. Seven categories. Enter on the day. £17. [po.st/CrossAtTheCastle](http://po.st/CrossAtTheCastle)

## Enter

### The Festive 40 fundraiser, Glamorgan, December 27

Raising money to buy a handcycle trike for Amanda Harris, a cyclist who was injured in a cycling accident last year, this festive 44-mile ride around the Vale of Glamorgan climbs over 3,000ft. Mulled wine and mince pies are available at the feed station. £20 (£30 on the day). [po.st/Festive40](http://po.st/Festive40)

## Ride

### The Winter Mini-Sportive Series, Cirencester, December 13

Described as a stripped-back sportive with no timing chips or feed stations, the third in a series of winter events compensates with homely hospitality and a modest entry fee. Completion of the 45- and 65-mile routes around the Cotswolds ends with hot food, drink and cake. HQ: Waterland Outdoor Pursuits. U16s free; over-16s £8.50.

[www.performancecycles.co.uk/mini/](http://www.performancecycles.co.uk/mini/)

## Get

### Tickets for Spin: The Cycling Festival, London, May 20-22

The winter nights are a perfect time to think about the warm spring days. Taking over London's Old Truman Brewery, this festival showcases a host of cycling's innovative creators, makers and experts. There will also be cycling film premieres, street food and craft beer set against live music and DJs. Weekend tickets cost £20.

[www.spinlondon.com](http://www.spinlondon.com)



## Guest column

### Dame Sarah Storey



## "I don't train on Christmas Day as everybody else gets a day off"

**C**hristmas is coming! This is good for a cyclist, as this is a great time of year where there are no distractions from the simple tasks of eating, sleeping and riding a bike. Our family Christmas is always spent between our home and my parents' house — we live about 200m apart.

Generally I don't train on Christmas Day itself because it is the one day that everybody else gets to have a day off work. For the rest of the holiday period, I make sure I get plenty of time with visitors, while not missing out on some lovely long miles or hours on the turbo! We also don't make plans to travel anywhere; it's nice to have a period of time we know each year will always be spent at home, catching up with the cat and just chilling out. That instantly makes it a more restful period, too.

This Christmas is extra exciting as not only is our daughter Louisa old enough to understand the excitement, I will also be an auntie again anytime now so there will be a new baby to visit and introduce her to.

I love Christmas for family time and being able to get out on my bike and come back to loads of food. If the weather isn't great or it snows though then it's equally as brilliant to get a blast on the turbo and then head off sledging. We are lucky to live in a part of the world where we have hills and flats as well as plenty of off-road routes. My cyclo-cross bike gets a bit more of an airing and my training is reactive to the weather or family that come to visit.

I always have a big endurance camp in Lanzarote just before Christmas and another immediately after New Year. This year is no different and it means there's no pressure to train over Christmas, so I can enjoy the best of both worlds and head to my January camp refreshed and having enjoyed lots of time with friends and family too.

Our Christmas tree will go up before the training camp in December and then when we come back we can do the wrapping and start feeling really festive. It's been such a busy period this autumn finalising everything for our women's professional team and launching the Boot Out Breast Cancer Cycling Club, so I am looking forward to a few days without emails! Happy Christmas, have an amazing time everyone!

Dame Sarah Storey is the most decorated Paralympian in the modern Games' history. *Sex and the City* is her other specialist subject



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# THE BIG QUESTION

## What do you think is a sure sign that you are obsessed with cycling?

When you stick your hand in your bag to grab your keys and pull out a bunch of Allen keys.

*James Etheridge*

When you are not cycling or in the pain cave you endlessly read cycling articles and look at all the stuff you could buy while checking everyone's rides on Strava.

*Mark Middleton*

When you watch the Tour at work with the volume down, pretending to be finishing the reports the boss wants. When you weigh all your gifts under the Christmas tree, instead of shaking them, for clues as to what's inside. When you walk into bike shops just to stand there for a while and smell the air. When the tyres on your bike cost more than the tyres on your car.

*François Cronje*

You take *Cycling Weekly* to the toilet.

*Paul Ruffly*

I've got three holidays booked. That's more than I've ever had booked at one time. All of which involve cycling, even if my girlfriend hasn't clocked that yet.

*Louis Carter*

Scouring Eurosport schedules every day for something cycling related.

*Sue Fortune*

How about giving up all your spare time to volunteer as a British Cycling commissaire? Standing in all weathers to judge races around the country and not getting paid... but worst of all, not getting any time to ride my own bike.

*Richard Mellen*

Eight bikes, 44 jerseys, 10,000 miles per year...

*Jean-François Bédard*



Wife leaving me after 22 years of marriage, claiming that cycling came before her. Harsh.

*Dave Pargeter*

No room for the car in the garage.

*Ned Taylor*

You delete your Facebook and Twitter accounts since all of your friends are on Strava.

*Daniel Litwin*

When I check the weather for a potential bike ride rather than a trip out with the kids.

*Jill Hyde*

When you think that a bike 'only' costs £4,000.

*Craig Arnold*

My daughter will say it's when my answer to every invite is, "I have to ride, but I can meet you afterwards."

*Deb Baker*

You have bike parts all over the house for absolutely no other reason than they just make you happy.

*Dino Lucarelli*

When you're driving your car and you go into aero position.

*Daniel Lopez*

When choosing a new car, the deciding factor is: will the bike rack be better on the roof or the boot?

*Geraldine Fields*

There's no such thing as a cycling obsession... or is that considered denial?

*Jonny Harvey*

### Next week's big question...

*What cycling-related gift is at the top of your Christmas list?*

*Reply to us at [cycling@timeinc.com](mailto:cycling@timeinc.com) or at [www.facebook.com/CyclingWeekly](https://www.facebook.com/CyclingWeekly)*



# Letters

Letter of the week  
wins a Lazer 02  
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## Don't blame Boris

**STAR LETTER** I wonder why the cyclist felt the need to insult Boris Johnson (*CW*, Nov 26) as he passed him on the cycle superhighway.

He may not agree with his politics but Boris Johnson has done more for London cyclists than any mayor before him. That man on a bike does not represent me as a cyclist, he just makes himself look rather foolish in my opinion.

Sadly it is people like him that give cyclists a bad name just because he is riding a bike, but not in my name.

I would like to apologise to Boris Johnson on behalf of all the cyclists who recognise that London cycling is better because of him.

*Elaine Barrow, email*

## Kate's a card

Just reading and finished Katie Archibald's column (*CW*, Nov 26). What a funny woman. Absolutely brill.

And I now know what a 'foof' is! If she is representative of our young riders then we are in good company. I wish her well in Rio along with all the team; she is certainly a 'braw lassie'.

*Colin Hall, Leyland*

## Scott a lot in it...

I enjoyed the race bike of the year article (*CW*, Nov 26), but I do hope not too many people with £6k to spare purchase the Scott Foil Team Issue on the basis of Scott's claim that "this bike is 27 seconds faster than the previous version over a 40km time trial at 40kph". Think about it...

*Rob Jones, Cardiff*

## Mile-eating mum

My mum, Barbara Pocklington, nee Parsons, recently passed her racing times, results sheets and trophies on to me, as she was going to throw them away. She was a good club cyclist based in Hartlepool in the 1950s.

In June 1955 my mum rode the 62 miles from Hartlepool to Wetherby, raced 25 miles in 1-14.8 and then rode back to Hartlepool, a round trip of 149 miles. Whilst this was an extreme example, she regularly rode to places like Newcastle, Durham and Richmond to compete in time trials and often had to be on the starting line for 6am. Her personal best for a '25' was 1 hour 11 minutes 43 seconds.

All of this was on a fixed gear bike, as there weren't any carbon fibre frames and gears were newfangled things for south-erners. She even went out training with the blokes when she was pregnant with me. I know she wasn't an exception and there were lots of keen cyclists doing very similar things.

*Neil Pocklington, email*

## Belgian blood

As a seven-time world veteran champion I have only been blood tested once, in Tyrol, Austria in 1986. The doctor in charge of the tester answered my question, which was: "Is testing veterans over 50 unusual, as they would be taking medication for the ageing process?" She replied: "What are you on, then?" Only coffee, I said. She responded: "Well, that's OK, but the Belgians were caught out last year!"

*Dave Orford, Belper*

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Johnny Helms was *Cycling Weekly's* resident cartoonist from February 1946 until November 2009.

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# Tom Dumoulin: Grand ambitions

As a time triallist with Tour hopes, comparisons with Sir Bradley Wiggins are inevitable, but the 25-year-old Dutchman is very much his own man



Gregor Brown

**W**earing the red leader's jersey of the Vuelta a España, Tom Dumoulin rode over the finish line and to his white Giant-Alpecin team car. The press surrounded him as he sat down. He looked up at the leader board above the podium. It showed that he had lost the race by three minutes and 46 seconds to Italian Fabio Aru of Astana. But it failed to relay the bigger message: the birth of a new Grand Tour star.

The then 24-year-old Dutchman from Maastricht had surprised and survived in the three-week Spanish Grand Tour. Many had only first heard his name before at the World Championships in Ponferrada last year, when he took the last podium step behind time trial victor Sir Bradley Wiggins and Tony Martin. Even when the Vuelta kicked off in Puerto Banús in late August, he was still considered a time trial specialist, not a Grand Tour contender.

His ride at the Vuelta drastically changed the landscape. The Dutch have seemingly forgotten about Bauke Mollema, Robert Gesink and Wilco Kelderman, and now put their hopes on Dumoulin. The newspapers in the Netherlands fill pages with stories about his new contract extension to 2018, and his Grand Tour and Olympic plans.

The message is simple, and 6ft 1in dark-haired Dumoulin spells it out when he sits down with *Cycling Weekly*: "I hope to one day win a Grand Tour."

### Mr Consistent

Dumoulin leapt into the imaginations of cycling fans on stage two of the Vuelta. If he could break free from the main contenders with small Colombian Esteban Chaves then what else could he do? The answer came over the following three weeks.

He placed third in another summit finish and climbed to win the Cumbre del Sol stage ahead of Sky's Chris Froome. His Giant-Alpecin team then said that the biggest test would be if he could perform consistently over three weeks. He did. By the first rest day and at the end of a big mountain block, he sat fourth overall. In the time trial in Burgos two days later, he won the stage and took the red jersey.

Dumoulin only failed to win the Vuelta at the final hurdle: the stage to Cercedilla, north-west of Madrid. Succumbing to

attacks by Aru and his gang of Astana team-mates, he became isolated, and rapidly lost time.

Had he only survived that penultimate stage then the big Dutchman would have won the Vuelta. Had Giant brought a Grand Tour team rather than one for fastman John Degenkolb, they might have been able to defend him. Had this or that happened then the results board might have read differently.

What the Vuelta showed, however, was that Dumoulin is a time triallist who can still push big watts even if he loses weight. He weighed 70kg at the Vuelta and according to data the team released, at the end of a three-day mountain block, he was still able to generate 6.1 watts/kg over a 25-34-minute climb.

Comparisons were immediately made to Wiggins, a time triallist who morphed into a Grand Tour rider.

"It might look like that a little bit," he says, "but I'm still Tom Dumoulin and not Bradley Wiggins. I'm not trying to become Bradley Wiggins."

### Impression

There was something very human about Dumoulin's Vuelta ride. Many who have ridden bikes know what it is to suffer, to

## "If I had to name one factor as to why I started cycling, it would be the Amstel"

maintain your place in the group only to crack at the last moment. Dumoulin's performance contrasted with the apparent invincibility of some Grand Tour contenders. According to Dutch journalist Raymond Kerckhoffs, Dumoulin considers himself "an atypical cyclist".

A Limburger, Dumoulin grew up next to the Amstel Gold Race's old finish straight on Maasboulevard in Maastricht. His family had no history in cycling. He played football at first. But the race helped draw him in.

"I cannot name one factor of why I started cycling, but if I had to then it would be the Amstel Gold Race," Dumoulin says.

"I didn't know anything about cycling, but that really got to me. I thought it was cool as a little boy with the helicopters, cyclists and colours."

Dumoulin leaves Chris Froome behind on stage nine of the Vuelta



Photos: Graham Watson, Yuzuru Sunada, Presse Sport/Offside l'Equipe



“When you are standing on the side of the road, with the helicopters in the distance, then the first cars pass and then the riders fly by — it’s special. And as a little kid, it makes an impression.”

Almost as if he’s followed the event, Dumoulin now lives with his girlfriend in Valkenburg near where Amstel Gold finishes these days. He says that he keeps trying to win the race, but “it never works out”.

He was given his first chance on the international stage when the national team took him to the 2010 Grand Prix of Portugal, part of the under-23s Nations Cup.

Having never ridden an aero bike before, he won the time trial stage on one he’d borrowed from a team-mate and held on for the general classification win the next day. Later that year, he won another time trial in the amateur Giro d’Italia.

“Maybe I’m atypical because I didn’t grow up with cycling and I had to find it out on my own,” he says. “I guess I’m starting to become a typical cyclist as the years go on.

“It wasn’t ever my childhood dream

to become a pro cyclist. Even when I started, it was never a plan to make it my profession and to make money. I was just cycling for fun. The dream was only there when I reached a level where it looked to be possible.”

Dumoulin had planned to sign with the Cervélo professional team, but the brakes were put on that when they were assimilated by Garmin. Instead he signed for Rabobank’s development

team for two years but left after one for Giant-Alpecin’s forerunner, Argos-Shimano. Since joining the squad in 2012, Dumoulin has won time trials in

the Critérium International, the Eneco Tour, Tour of the Basque Country, and this June, two in the Tour de Suisse. The Swiss results helped him place third overall behind winner Simon Spilak and Sky’s Geraint Thomas, and offered a hint of things to come.

This year Dumoulin put all of his weight behind the Tour de France and attended an altitude training camp in Sierra Nevada, Spain. His goal was a spell in the yellow jersey. Although he

**“The Olympics has a special place in his heart. He has chances to win a gold medal”**

Dumoulin kept the Vuelta red jersey almost to the bitter end



could only place fourth behind winner Rohan Dennis on Dutch soil in the opening time trial, Dumoulin hoped he could climb into the yellow jersey at the end of stage three on the Mur de Huy. However, a mass high-speed spill on the way forced him to abandon with a dislocated shoulder.

Going to the Vuelta was an attempt to salvage his summer.

#### Eyes on Rio

Before perceptions altered at the Vuelta, Dumoulin had said that his aim was to





The Dutchman flies  
on stage 19 to Avila

win a gold medal in the time trial at the Rio Olympic Games. His Grand Tour status may now have changed, but his outlook hasn't.

In 2016 Dumoulin may race a Grand Tour, but he might also avoid the stressful classification fight. To some experts, that would be a shame.

"Everyone can see that he's a very good time triallist. He's been good for a long time, but when you can take that time trial ability and use it to go uphill you become a very potent force in stage racing," Team Sky's principal, Sir David

Brailsford, observes. "We won the Tour and the time trial in London 2012 back-to-back, and we know how to do that. You have to shoot for stars and get to the moon."

Alberto Contador, winner of seven Grand Tours, also sees Dumoulin's potential: "In the Vuelta he was very strong, incredible, even if his team wasn't ready.

"The Giro would be very good for him," he adds (Contador himself plans to target the Tour and Vuelta next season). "There are two very good time trials. If

he's at the same level as he was at the Vuelta, then he has a big chance to win."

Aiming for the Olympics requires a delicate juggle of trade team and national commitments. Racing in country's colours and on a blacked out bike in the Olympics is too much for some. For example, Etixx-Quick Step boss Patrick Lefevere said that he did not want Mark Cavendish to skip races to focus on racing for Great Britain — hence the move to MTN.

"[Dumoulin] put the Olympics out there as a big goal, but he has other goals,



as well,” Giant sports director, Aike Visbeek, reasons. “It has a special place in his heart. He has one or two chances to win a gold medal there.

“We support that. Winning a gold medal is important for our team. What makes it different is we can help and support our rider to get there, but we are not at the event itself.”

Visbeek adds that the team needs to examine the Giro and Tour routes to decide which is best. Passing up an ideal Tour route, Visbeek says, would be impossible, but Dumoulin is unbending. “Rio is my main focus,” he asserts. “It’s difficult to say how the approach in the rest of the season will be, but I’ll definitely need to be 100 per cent in Rio and possibly be 100 per cent in the other parts of the year.

“Maybe it’s possible to be 100 per cent in a Grand Tour and 100 per cent in Rio.”

## Experience

Much depends on this winter and how Dumoulin comes out of it for next

season, and 2016 could shape the remainder of his career.

Dumoulin brought down his weight for 2015 to test his limits. He wanted to see how low he could go without affecting his time trialling. He found that he could not only climb better, but time trial faster too. “I really want to keep my TT as my main focus — my

main weapon,”

Dumoulin says.

“If being a Grand Tour rider means losing my capability of riding a good TT, then maybe I won’t do it. It’s about looking for the right

balance between power and weight.

“In the Vuelta, I was still not on my limit in terms of weight loss. It’ll still take some time. I’m 24 and I don’t want to lose a lot of weight drastically. Over three years, I could lose one or two kilograms.”

Visbeek places gaining experience above losing weight, though. “We have little capacity to lose more weight — that is not a significant gain to be made,” he says. “The main progression comes from riding more Grand Tours, getting



All roads lead to Rio for the Limburger

stronger, riding for the GC in the third week. He has to do that one or two times more to get experience.”

Though the Vuelta came late in the season and left little time to manoeuvre, Giant is circling its wagons around Dumoulin and Frenchman Warren Barguil for a more classification-focused team. This autumn, it extended their contracts through to 2018 and let go of sprinter Marcel Kittel.

The message appears clear: Dumoulin will time trial in Rio and, even if not this year, race for Grand Tour glory in the future. He, understandably, may not be keen on the Wiggins comparisons but they’re somewhat inevitable.

“If you want to talk about a time trialist becoming a Grand Tour rider, then Bradley Wiggins might be the closest comparison,” he says.

But he adds: “The only cyclist I had heard of when I was a boy was Michael Boogerd. It’s not like he was my idol; I didn’t have a poster of him next to my bed.

“When I turned pro, I always looked at big riders and how they did things: trying to learn how they trained and prepared for a race. I never had one who was my idol, though.

“I don’t want to mirror any other rider, and definitely not the biggest riders,” he concludes. “I have to make my own career.”

## “Maybe it’s possible to be 100 per cent in a Grand Tour and 100 per cent in Rio”



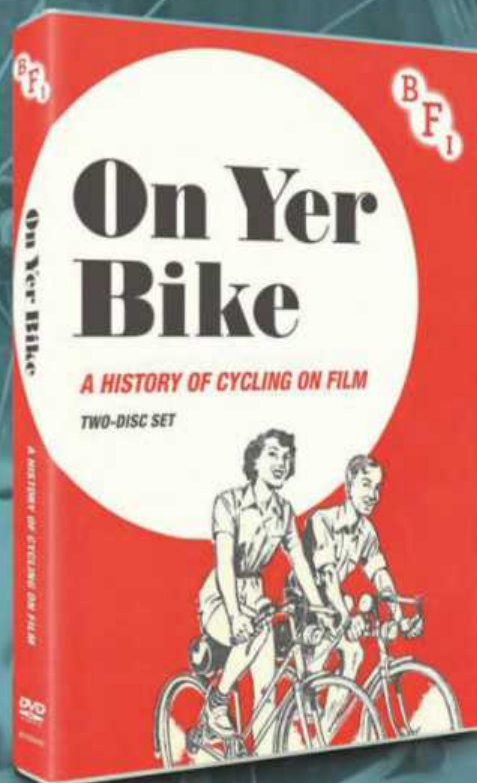
Worlds bronze medallist Dumoulin (r) insists he is not the ‘next Wiggins’ (centre)



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# Muddy hard work

Unsung heroes of cyclo-cross

Hugh Gladstone

**S**plattered faces, clogged drive-trains and slippery cambers all add to the challenges a rider has to grin and bear when a cyclo-cross is run off in particularly muddy conditions. For helpers in the pits meanwhile, there is barely a moment's rest as they scrub away with bucket and brush only for another filthy bike to roll in for their attention.

It was these 'unsung heroes' braving

the wet and cold in the pits that particularly caught snapper Chris Auld's attention when Durham hosted a round of both the North East Cross League and the National Trophy last month.

#### **Incredible dedication**

"The amount of dedication, time and expense that goes into supporting riders by family and friends is something quite incredible," Auld notes.

Facing his own challenge of keeping

his cameras clean and dry, Auld moved around the circuit exploiting moody skies, reflections and the haze of jet-wash spray to capture this atmospheric set of pictures from the races.

"With it being Remembrance weekend I couldn't help but liken the muddy conditions to a scene from the Battle of the Somme," he says. "Of course, there's really no comparison. At the end of the day here, everyone could laugh and joke about it."





**Left:** This is the pits  
**Above:** Greg Taylor (Blumilk.com) tries to stay upright  
**Right:** Muddy heck  
**Below:** The racing left its mark on the playing field  
**Below right:** When all's said and done



Photos: Chris Auld





**Left:** Ben Sumner (Beeline-Gener8 RT) mounts a bank on the way to fourth in the senior men's National Trophy race  
**Above:** Feargus Scherczer (Vieri Velo RT) catches his breath  
**Below:** It's not just the riders who end up splattered in mud  
**Below left:** And it's not just the bikes that get jet-washed — Emily Wadsworth (Beeline-Gener8 RT) cleans up

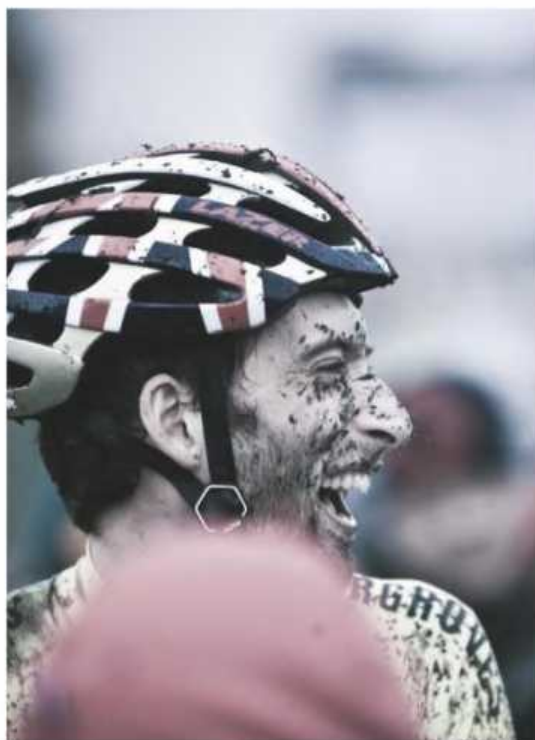


**Above:** Tyre cleaning  
**Left:** Spraying away the grime  
**Right:** Helpers are heroes





**Above:** Hannah Payton (Team Kinesis UK) reflects on a tough ride to fourth place...  
**Below:** ...but still gets a fresh Trophy leader's jersey  
**Right:** Winner Ian Field (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley RT) had the last laugh in the senior men's Trophy race





# Cycling crimes of fashion

Fashion faux pas litter cycling like discarded water bottles on a Grand Tour. *John Woodhouse* takes a look at pro cycling's propensity to take a wrong turn in the sartorial stakes

**I**t is a truism to say that cycling is a sport that lends itself to the outer limits of fashion.

There have been moments in its history that have made flamboyant pop stars like Adam Ant in his heyday look conservatively attired.

This is a place where all too often the front wheel of style collides with the rear wheel of ego to produce the most horrible mess. A desire to be at the cutting edge of chic that instead results in 1,200 retweets of a drool encrusted beard or a horribly misjudged skunk-print prologue outfit.

Cycling and fashion are inextricably linked. Put simply, cyclists like to look good. Never would someone glance at Mark Cavendish, for instance, and say: "Now there's a man who plays bowls."

With its tight-fitting gear, its tan lines, its unwritten codes about acceptable socks, it is a sport unlike any other. Football, for example, is essentially limited to a basic playing kit. And no one has ever uttered the line, "Wow, he looks fantastic in that Scunthorpe away strip."

## Sporting world fashionistas

Rugby's the same. If there's a vicious headwind, rare is it that a winger will wear an all-in-one bodysuit to afford him less resistance. Similarly, cricketers don't wear a pointy helmet to help effect a quick single. When the women's Great Britain curling squad secured gold at the Winter

Olympics in 2002 it wasn't with shaved legs as a marginal gain.

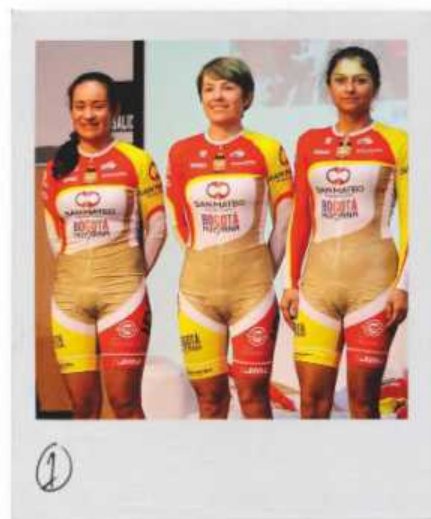
The only sport that has the potential to rival cycling in the fashion stakes is athletics, but even then we still see the world's greatest physical specimens trotting round the track in what are effectively vests. We'll be waiting a long time before we see the Mo Farah summer range at Topman.

## Open the wardrobe of shame

Possibly these other sports are happy to take the more conservative view. No female equestrian team, for example, has ever sent its members out in an outfit with a flesh coloured midriff. And it is there, with a certain inevitability, we start our rummage through cycling's wardrobe of shame. For nothing better exemplifies the sport's propensity to take the starter's gun, insert a live round, and aim it at their foot.

Many, when faced with the image of Colombian women's cycling team IDRD-Bogota Humana-San Mateo-Solgar (1), would have felt that they were looking at a picture that had somehow escaped the pages of a niche top shelf magazine. It soon went viral across the internet, which was perhaps the plan all along.

UCI president Brian Cookson was unimpressed, stating that the uniforms were "unacceptable by any standard of decency". Remarkably, one of the riders







③



⑥

## Bad hair daze

It started with Laurent Fignon's somewhat un-aerodynamic ponytail costing him the 1989 Tour de France and has continued downhill ever since.

Hair and cycling has rarely been a pleasant mix. Putting aside the late 90s/early 00s craze for bleached hair that left the peloton looking like an Arctic fox convention — Richard Virenque being a serial offender — the mullet, as it's wont, is possibly the least palatable addition to the peloton.

Step forward Laurent Brochard, Tour de France stage winner and a man whose hair is to fashion what the wolf is to goats. So attached was Brochard to looking as if he had a small raccoon on his skull, one can only assume he had a promotional sideline with the Mullet Advisory Council.

The truly shocking thing is he was not alone. Say 'hello' Vladimir Karpets. And step forward for runners-up medals New Zealand speed merchant Shane Archbold (the Flying Mullet), and Aussie power-house Phil Anderson.

Also, let's not forget hair of a facial nature, at the forefront of which sits Sean Eadie, 2002 sprint world champ with a beard so vast there's a very real chance of finding Robert Millar in it.

David Zabriskie, Peter Sagan, and Chris Horner cannot escape mention too on the face fur front.

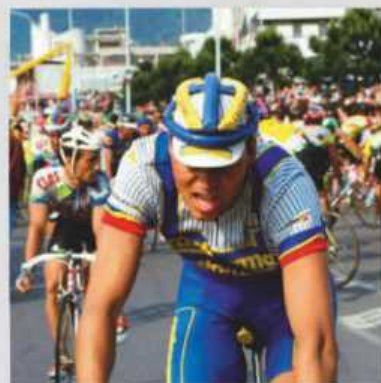
Then, of course, there's the carefully coiffured Wiggo. Thank goodness he is a fan of Paul Weller. Demis Roussos would have been unthinkable.



④



⑦



⑤



⑧



claimed to have designed the kit. “As an athlete, as a woman, and as the cyclist that I am,” said Angie Rojas, “I wouldn’t be ashamed with this kind of design.”

One assumes that she has not been tapped up by Laura Ashley.

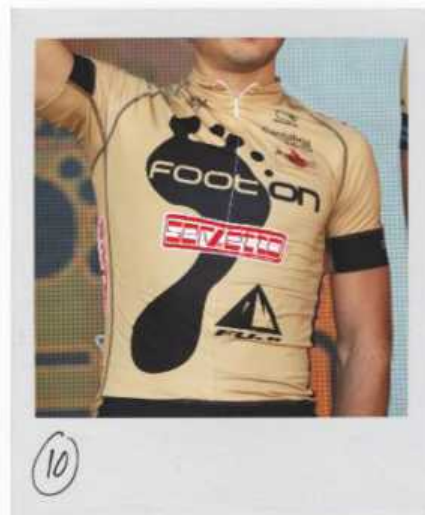
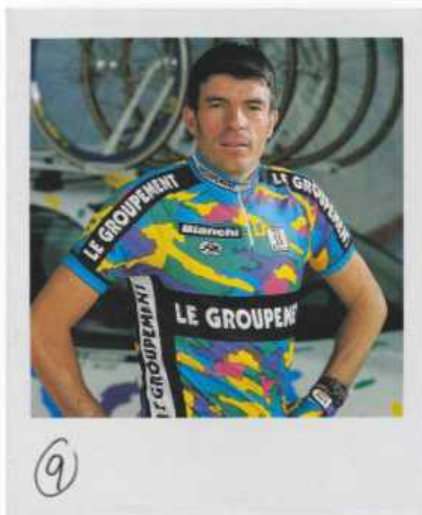
Cycling is a sport that maintains a rather dated relationship with women. Not only does it still insist on podium girls but everyday sexism abounds. Just look at the somewhat controversial ‘two naked women’ socks (2) given away in the welcome bag at the Interbike show in Las Vegas. Really? Now that must have been a great welcome if you happened to be a woman. What’s next, topless women on the bike stands?

Femininity can be celebrated in other ways. Laura Trott (3), for example, pioneered her own flower power cycling shoes. But, one has to ask, where is this going to end? The Cath Kidston pro range? A bit of Dorothy Perkins retro? And does it help psych-out an opponent when you’re wearing footwear that suggests you spend your spare time skipping through meadows with a butterfly net? When Lance Armstrong turned and stared Jan Ullrich in the eye, he certainly didn’t do so with a daisy on his shoe. Nor did he do so through a pair of ‘over the top sunglasses’, seemingly designed to make a rival fall off their bike laughing rather than feel intimidated.

Sunglasses, of course, have long been a way in which cyclists have expressed their fashion nous. Generally, though, this has incorporated the more pragmatic need for a shield. Indeed, a streamlined goggle can look most fine, and yet in 2013 Ryder Hesjedal (4) plumped for a pair of Poc bins that suggested he was not so much a participant in le Tour but enjoying a week on the sands at Rimini. Ryder should take note, it’s but a short step from there to a pair of Dame Edna Everage horn-rimmed shades.

### The Italian-plumber look

The head is an ever popular part of the pro-cyclist’s body on which to try something different. Helmet designs have ranged from Twilight Zone alien to discomfiting brain. Among the worst was Bjarne Riis’s (5) during his early 90s Castorama days, one of the few items of cycling headwear that appeared to have been blown up. The overall look was not aided by Castorama (6) favouring a dungaree style jersey. Made to appear



## “When Armstrong turned and stared Ullrich in the eye, he certainly didn’t do so with a daisy on his shoe”

as if incorporating shoulder braces, all it succeeded in doing was making the wearer look like a low-ranking Mario tribute (not Mr Cipollini – see sidebar). BigMat went the same way. Even now their riders can recall being stopped along the Giro route and asked if they had time to plumb in a bathroom.

Stephen Roche’s (7) Fagor kit when accompanied with cap fits into the same category. Rather than deliver an insightful reflection on the day’s stage, one rather expects him to ask, “Would you like fries with that?”

The less said about Ag2r’s (8) brown kit the better. It is, put simply, an offence against humanity. There are surely pros who’d rather ride for a fifth tier Belgian outfit than don that. For sheer hideousness, Le Groupement’s team jersey (9) of 1995 comes desperately close to challenging it with a pattern seemingly designed by a small primary school child with a love of kaleidoscopes.

The catwalk of shame should also mention Footon-Servetto (10), whose foul tan garb featuring a vast print of a human trotter was enough to turn those



of sensitive constitution queasy. Carrera (11), infamously, dished up the denim shorts and skinsuit, which, perhaps, would have worked had more cyclists been into Status Quo. No cyclist surely wishes to carry the psychological burden of thinking they’re in denim. It is possibly the least comfortable material to wear in the saddle. Only carpet comes close.

Team Sky (12), of course, upped the ante kit-wise when they released their see-through affair in 2014. Ill-advised to be worn by a MAMIL on a cold day in Skipton, the suit’s temperature-regulating qualities were better suited to a heatwave in the Massif Central. Whether Chris Froome’s modelling session extended beyond the shot in which he stands with his midriff unfortunately juxtaposed against a miniature Christmas tree is unclear.





Certainly it has the feel of one of the outer images on the piece of card upon which KP used to pin their nuts for sale in pubs.

### California gleaming

One can't always blame the kit makers. All the design skills in the world can't legislate for the actions, or indeed appearance, of the competitor within, no better illustrated than by Rohan Dennis (13) at the Tour of California in 2014. Dennis's perfectly acceptable Garmin-Sharp jersey had been unzipped to reveal a chest so pale many mistook it for a Bernard Matthews turkey. If he'd tumbled exhausted from the saddle after crossing the line, few would have been surprised had he shattered like alabaster.

There are exceptions who are beyond reproach when it comes to fashion. One

such is Victoria Pendleton, a regular at designer gatherings and who displayed a particularly fine array of outfits during her few weeks on *Strictly Come Dancing*. One wonders if she might not have considered the effect her Halloween show costume could have had on rival Anna Meares.

The Tour de France's famed Il Diavolo (14) is another who's made a clear and, he may find out, possibly unforgiveable error. Hopefully, none of us will ever find out, but surely the devil doesn't wear red leggings. Or sandals for that matter.

One last thing before we shut the wardrobe door. Don't put donkeys (15) in the leader's jerseys of the Tour de France. Why, when it comes to fashion statements, pick on an innocent creature when you can make a perfectly good ass of yourself? ■

## Super (model) Mario

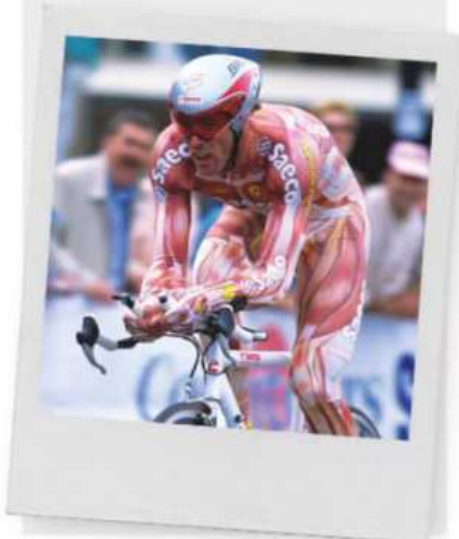
"What are we going to do about Mario?" doesn't quite have the ring of the nuns' despairing question in *The Sound Of Music*. But the fashion foibles of Mr Cipollini have caused just as much head scratching.

So where do we start? Perhaps with the big cats, of which Cipo clearly considers himself to be one. The Italian has been known to turn up to Grand Tours in a tiger print skin-suit that had many wondering when exactly it was he signed for 'Team Frosties'.

His famed mane of hair, meanwhile, earned him the nickname The Lion King, although actually his poodle cut was more reminiscent of a character from *Lady And The Tramp*.

Also hanging on Cipo's rail of delights is a highly charming 'body parts' skin-suit that revealed, in graphic detail, the human muscle make-up. In action, he had the look of a chop on wheels. With Cipo around there was always the risk of a malnourished mutt running into the road.

It wasn't just the hair on his head Cipo liked to display. Never shy to show off his physique, he was also a proponent of the sleeveless jersey, armpit hair whistling in the wind on a descent. For a man who has ridden toga-clad in a chariot on a Tour de France rest day and bedecked himself in the guise of James Bond, it should come as little surprise that Cipo trumped both appearances — dressing, for a Northwave shoes ad in what can only loosely be described as a musketeer rescuing a naked girl. If only Cipo would slob around in a tracksuit for a day.



## Are solid tyres worth a try?

**James Bracey** weighs up the pros and cons of solid tyres for winter riding

**I**t's getting cold and wet and you have just had to stop for your second puncture in as many miles. Sound familiar? Sadly, punctures are an unavoidable part of cycling life. You can try to protect yourself by fitting tyres with 'puncture protection' or inner tubes filled with sealant but at some point the inevitable will happen and normally at the least welcome point of your ride. So could solid tyres and their promise of no more punctures be the answer?

Ask any cyclist to picture solid tyres and most will think of wheelchairs or children's bikes, not viable alternatives to the tyres on your road bike. But now thanks to brands such as Tannus Tyres and the UK's own Greentyre pushing the development of solid tyre technology, solid tyres could well be an option for your next tyre purchase.

Modern solid tyres are made of a micro closed cell polymer resin (MCP) manipulated to make a solid foam-like material. With careful processing MCP can create a durable tyre with most of the performance benefits of a standard pneumatic tyre plus the crucial advantage of never puncturing.

It's this promise of never getting caught out with a puncture and not having to carry spare tubes or tools that Chris Proctor from Coyote Sports, the UK distributor of Tannus Tyres, cites as the reason why so many riders are using their tyres. Currently popular with commuters, e-bike riders and the like, the zero maintenance aspect of solid tyres is also a big draw.

### Why aren't we all using solid tyres?

The crucial hurdle that stands in the way of solid tyres becoming viable for the more serious cyclist is the real and perceived gulf in performance in comparison to a standard tyre and tube set-up. Solid tyres have a reputation for being slow, heavy, difficult to fit, uncomfortable and lacking in grip — all key factors in choosing tyres, and for most riders these far outweigh having to deal with the occasional puncture.

Colin Scarsi, MD at Greentyre, is quick to recognise this issue: "We embarked 12 months ago on a programme to close the performance gap between solid tyres and pneumatics. It was sufficiently meritorious to be granted a prestigious SMART award,



A solid winter training option?

with the design team at Greentyre having been working with partners in Germany, France and Finland to produce a new generation of Greentypes for the summer of 2016."

Proctor claims that Tannus tyres "are lighter than most tyre, tube and rim tape combinations, combined with the material we use having much enhanced elasticity

**Yes**



### Colin Scarsi

MD Greentyre

We have customers who are using their third or fourth sets of

Greentypes and won't use a bike without them. For some cyclists a puncture just comes with the joy of cycling, for others like me they are a pain. We all know people who go to take their bike out for a spin on a sunny Sunday and find tyres flat or perished and then don't bother and the bike languishes in the shed or garage never to be used again.

**No**



### Shelley Childs

Brand manager, Continental Tyres

While in theory a solid set-up could be developed to ensure conformity with rim

manufacturers and compounding produced to offer a high level of grip for regular cycling, the performance benefits of a pneumatic tyre system still outweigh the argument for solid tyres. A pneumatic system, combined with a premium grade casing and high quality compound is, in our opinion, still a necessity for the cycling enthusiast or racer who demands assured feedback and the maximum safety from his or her tyre system.





ensuring a better feel while riding, good grip performance and a much lower rolling resistance — approximately 15 per cent less.”

Currently the majority of the larger bicycle tyre manufacturers have no future plans to develop solid tyres. Vittoria is currently focused on improving tyre compounds, incorporating materials such as graphene to create tyres with differing characteristics depending on tyre load, and Dave Taylor, marketing manager at Schwalbe UK explains: “Solid tyres are not new of course; if we believed that they were worth it then we would be developing them ourselves. The future of road bike technology from our standpoint is tubeless technology.”

So solid tyres are catching up, creating a viable alternative that can appeal to a wider spectrum of riders, but they are not looking to take over from pneumatic tyres.

## OUR TAKE

**For a large number of cyclists, solid tyres represent a viable alternative in the war against punctures. However, they are not without their limitations and until grip levels, road feel and fitting issues are improved they will have limited appeal to more serious riders. The leaders in the solid-tyre field are working to improve the image and performance of the tyres but as the larger tyre brands are focusing on other pneumatic tyre technologies such as tubeless and alternative rubber compounds, solid tyres will continue to have limited appeal outside of the commuting and occasional cyclist realms.**

## HOT STUFF

### One Life iD

One Life iD wristbands come in a variety of colours, styles and a choice of either text or a QR code that links to

a personal website page for more detailed information.

With a host of other ID items available too, including stickers and dog tags, there's no more excuses for riding without identification and ICE information.

[www.onelifeid.com](http://www.onelifeid.com)

Price: from £16.99

Report: February



### Bontrager Ballista jersey and shorts

If performance is everything to you then you may want to take a look at this offering from Bontrager — with the clothing purely aimed at racing. Although this is high end, we doubt we'll be able to test these until next year, unless we sun ourselves on an exotic training camp... where's my passport?

[www.trek bikes.com](http://www.trek bikes.com)

Price: Jersey £119.99 Shorts £139.99

Report: April



### Rotor INpower

This affordable spindle-based power meter offers all the usual power metrics as well as a few extras, such as Torque Effectiveness and Pedal Smoothness.

Its high level of compatibility will appeal to many — it fits all 30mm Rotor cranks and almost every frame on the market.

Contact: [www.saddleback.co.uk](http://www.saddleback.co.uk)

Price: £699

Report:

January



## Giro Gauge HV off-road shoes £169.99



The shoes have a 'high-volume' fit to suit those with wide feet and high arches; and with Giro's SuperNatural Fit Kit you can adjust the level of arch support. The two wide straps and micro-ratchet buckle provide a secure closure that can be adjusted easily on the fly. The Easton EC70 carbon composite sole is firm without being uncomfortable, and power transfer feels good. The shoes are very durable and cope well with hopping on and off the bike — the toe is reinforced and the raised lugs protect the sole. There are lighter and more flash looking shoes available, but these are good quality, reliable and sturdy shoes that are well suited to cyclo-cross and off-road riding. *Chris Hovenden*

**820g for the pair**

[www.zyro.co.uk](http://www.zyro.co.uk)

**8**



### Look LM-ment jersey £124.99

Alongside its bike range, Look also sells clothing, with the LM-ment being its answer to the Gabba. It's a short-sleeved water-resistant jersey, which has removable water-resistant arm-warmers (sold separately). At the back, the three pockets are covered by a flap, which is held by a single Velcro patch over the centre pocket. This keeps everything dry and the content of the centre pocket firmly in place, but means that the sides of the flap can be lifted to get at the side pockets. The jacket is comfortable to use with a close racing fit and superb weatherproofing. As with many such jerseys, it can get slightly clammy on harder, high tempo rides, but otherwise breathes fairly well. *Paul Norman* **292g**

[www.lookcycle.com](http://www.lookcycle.com)

**9**



### Le Col Casual Jacket £250

Us cyclists usually want to be spotted as such when off the bike, but we don't want to be wearing a jersey or cap awkwardly at the shops or in a meeting. Subtlety is key, which is what you get with Le Col's Casual Jacket — a 'down jacket'-style coat that will certainly keep you warm out and about. Fit is OK but on a sit-up-and-beg bike it's a little restrictive on the arms and shoulders. Though the extended Lycra cuffs work well with gloves and the three zipped pockets (one concealed at the back) look after valuables. At £250 it is on the pricey side and office opinions are very much divided when it comes to the bin-bag looks. *Symon Lewis*

**Weight 429g**  
[www.lecol.net](http://www.lecol.net)

**7**





### **Polaris Windshear jacket £64.99**

Staying warm on the bike can be an expensive business, but this Polaris jacket shows you don't have to break the bank. For £65 you get a very warm jersey that is seriously windproof and will certainly see you through all but the very coldest temperatures Britain can offer.

The downside of this warmth is that the Windshear isn't the most breathable jacket out there. It's fine for commutes and long, steady base miles, but I found myself quickly overheating when putting in any sort of extended effort. The loose fit makes it comfortable, although using the thumb loops caused the sleeves to stretch. Storage is decent with three open pockets, and one with a zip for valuables. *Henry Robertshaw* **471g**

[www.polaris-bikewear.co.uk](http://www.polaris-bikewear.co.uk)

**7**



### **X-Bionic Energizer long sleeved base layer £67**

This layer claims to be loaded with technical features. The main selling point is sweat management. By capturing your sweat in little fabric pockets this garment claims to better manage your body temperature and thus improve performance. Unfortunately I didn't like the feeling of the synthetic weave and much prefer the texture of fine merino against my skin. That said, for high intensity efforts, when you sweat considerably more, the Energizer did a much better job at wicking sweat than merino. The fit is decent and offers slight compression, but the cuffs consistently rode up my arms. The idea is sound but, based purely on performance, it's hard to justify the high price. *Oliver Bridgewood* **176g(S/M)**

[www.x-bionic.co.uk](http://www.x-bionic.co.uk)

**6**

### **Jetblack Jet RX Road pump £22.99**

The Jetblack pump does its simple job well. Its hose screws into the top of the handle for storage and is covered by a rubber cap to keep it clean. The hose unscrews from the pump and fits both Presta and Schrader valves. The pump is comfortable to use and has a relatively long 18cm stroke thanks to its 23cm overall length. This means that it gets a tyre up to around 100psi pretty easily in around 150 strokes, so you can get going again quickly if you get a flat when out on the road. It's quite light, comes with blue and red handle options and is very well priced for an efficient, easy-to-use pump. *Paul Norman* **100g**

[www.chickencycles.co.uk](http://www.chickencycles.co.uk)



**8**

### **Knog Blinder R70 rear light £48.99**

**Product of the week**

If you're after the best rear light on the market, then this is probably it. The Knog Blinder R70 is among the brightest you can buy at 70 lumens, and offers five different light modes; two constant and three flashing. This range of modes mean there's also a range of run times, anything from 3.5 hours all the way up to a whopping 20 hours. But the good thing is that if you do begin to run out of juice, then there's a low battery indicator to let you know. Recharging is also a doddle thanks to the in-built USB, and the range of straps mean it can even be fitted to an aero seatpost. *Henry Robertshaw* **46g**

[www.todayscyclist.co.uk](http://www.todayscyclist.co.uk)



**10**

## **LONG TERM TEST**

### **4 months later**

#### **Bontrager Velocis Windshell gloves £34.99**

With their relatively thin construction, I always expect to get cold fingers when using these Bontrager gloves in really chilly conditions, but this still isn't the case even as winter gets going with a vengeance. They are completely windproof and water-resistant, and the internal seams have softened with multiple washes. *HR*

[www.bontrager.com](http://www.bontrager.com)

**9**



Perfect gloves for the winter club run

### **Can't live without**

#### **Muc-Off Carbon Gripper £15**

If you've had handlebar or seatpost slip you'll understand the frustration. The simple solution is Muc-Off's new Carbon Gripper paste. No more slip! Easy to apply and adds friction to carbon areas with low torque clamping. *SL*

[muc-off.com](http://muc-off.com)



Overtightened stem and seatpost bolts be gone!

# Cross bike group test

What should you look for in a mid-priced cyclo-cross bike? *Paul Norman* sizes up four CX bikes costing between £1,200 and £1,600



## What?

In this price range there's a crossover between aluminium-framed cyclo-cross bikes and those built of carbon-fibre. The four we test here come with clincher tyres and either a traditional 46/36 double chainset or a single-ring SRAM 1 set-up. They also have disc brakes and sport a mixture of traditional quick-release and thru axles.

## Why?

With the off-road season in full swing and conditions getting increasingly cold and wet, it's prime time for getting out on a cross bike. We've tested exclusively disc brake models (hydraulic and mechanical) as these are now well established and found on the majority of cyclo-cross bikes around this price point.

## How?

We started out by riding some of the summer cyclo-cross races in south-east London and now we've taken to the winter series to see how versatile these bikes are. We've also set off on longer cross-country excursions to test the bikes' comfort and ability on more mixed terrain.





# Raleigh RX Pro £1,500.00

Miles ridden: 100 | Size tested: 56cm | Weight: 9.73kg/21.45lb

## Frame

The RX Pro sits firmly in the middle of Raleigh's range of eight cyclo-cross bikes, with a cyclo-cross-specific frame made from hydroformed aluminium and butted tube joints. To improve comfort and reduce weight, the fork is a full carbon cyclo-cross design equipped with a 15mm thru axle, rather than a classic quick-release. Although the cables are not internally routed, they run along the top of the top tube and the underside of the down tube, which keeps them nicely out of the way.

## Specification

For £1,500 you get some impressive components. Equipped with SRAM Rival 1 (except the chainset which is the lower spec SRAM S350) the RX Pro has one chainring,

so there is no need for a front derailleur and the wide 11-32t cassette means there is a good range of gears. It avoids the overlap you get with standard two ring set-ups and often chain derailment.

The brakes are SRAM Rival hydraulic discs. To accommodate the hydraulic system the hoods are prominent, which on a road bike might be a negative for some but on a cyclo-cross



Cables run down the underside of down tube



The fork is a full-carbon cyclo-cross design

bike adds to the sturdy looks and gives you more to hold on to. The nice Cole Rollen CX Tubeless wheels are paired with impressive Schwalbe X1 35mm tyres, which coped well with all but the muddiest conditions.

## Ride

The RX Pro provides a comfortable yet responsive ride. The hydraulic disc

brakes performed consistently well in all weather and allowed me to negotiate technical passages with confidence. When riding in the saddle power transfer felt good and when I needed to get out of the saddle for some extra zip, the bike responded well. On the whole the thru axles made removing and replacing the wheels straightforward, but I found that there was a risk of losing the thru-axle adaptors.

## Value

The RX Pro is a very good bike in what is an increasingly competitive market. It sports a modern spec and quality components. The Vitus does have a slightly higher spec but you pay an extra £100 for the privilege.

8



# Ridley X-Bow 10 £1,199.99

Miles ridden: 120 | Size tested: Medium | Weight: 10.47kg/23.08lb

## Frame

Ridley's X-Bow is its entry machine, with three higher priced rides above it. Its frame is aluminium while the fork has carbon legs and an aluminium steerer. In true cyclo-cross style the cables run externally along the top tube, which is broad to distribute weight when

carrying, allowing for a little more comfort. There's a good range of sizes offered too, from XXS to XL.

## Specification

Another classic cyclo-cross feature, the drivetrain uses a 46/36 double chainring with external bearings. There's an 11-28 cassette and shifting is managed by Shimano 105.

The X-Bow runs on Fulcrum Racing Sport wheels which have 21 plain-gauge spokes and feature Fulcrum's 2:1 spoke ratio in both wheels. They are shod with Challenge Grifo 32mm tyres. The wheels run on standard quick-releases rather than following the emerging trend to use thru axles.

Brakes are TRP Spyre mechanical discs, with a 160mm rotor at front and a 140mm rotor at the rear.



The cables run externally

sand and slippery sections. With its short reach, it's easy to mount and dismount too and not so heavy that it's uncomfortable to shoulder.

The Challenge tyres provide plenty of grip and sure handling. The Spyre brakes are a bit tiring to use and lack the bite of hydraulics, while the lever hoods don't quite provide as much purchase as the SRAMs.

## Value

As the cheapest bike on test, one might expect the Ridley to be outclassed by its competitors. It's the heaviest bike too, but makes up for this with its assured handling. It's versatile, with mounts for mudguards and a rack. It's a great all-rounder that will serve for commuting, touring duties or racing.



The steerer is made of aluminium

These provide good stopping power, although they are heavier at the lever than hydraulics.

## Ride

Ridley's cyclo-cross expertise shows in the X-Bow's off-road ride. The bike is confidence-inspiring with an ability to maintain stability and momentum through mud,

8





# Vitus Energie Pro £1,599.99

Miles ridden: 111 | Size tested: 54cm | Weight: 8.95kg/19.73lb

## Frame

The Vitus's frame and fork are made of high-modulus carbon-fibre. There's internal cable routing, although the rear mech cable pops out briefly under the bottom bracket before disappearing again into the chainstay. The tube profiles are curved, which along with the bike's low weight make it comfortable to shoulder.

There's good clearance front and rear around the 32mm tyres and only a small lip behind the bottom bracket, so mud shouldn't accumulate there. Both the front and rear wheels run on thru axles, with 142mm spacing at the rear.

## Specification

The bike comes equipped with SRAM Rival 1, a single-ring set-up with a 40-tooth chainring and an 11-32 tooth

cassette, giving a wide gear range to tackle most slopes. Wheels are a mix of Novatec hubs and WTB rims and are shod with reasonably aggressive WTB Cross Wolf tyres, which give adequate grip in the mud. The SRAM hydraulic brakes offer strong stopping power, with a light



action and good modulation.

## Ride

Jumping onto the Vitus takes more of a leap than the other bikes on test as the bottom bracket is the best part of 2cm higher. This can make mounting and dismounting a little disconcerting. To compensate I ended up dropping the saddle to bottom bracket height by a centimetre.

Once aboard, though, the extra height offers enhanced clearance over obstacles and has no obvious affect on stability. The bike rides nicely and took on mud, sand and rough stuff confidently. The SRAM 1 shifting is an asset over rough terrain, as the chain is kept firmly in place by the clutched rear mech and the alternating wide-narrow teeth in the chainring.



## Value

One of the more expensive bikes on test, the Vitus makes up for this with its modern spec and quality components. At 9kg it is the lightest bike on the test. It doesn't have mudguard eyes although there are two sets of bottle bosses, so it's really a dedicated cross racer rather than a rugged all-rounder.

9



# Norco Threshold C 105

£1,599.99

Miles ridden: 116 | Size tested: 53cm | Weight: 9.51kg/20.97lb

## Frame

The Norco's all-carbon frame is chunky, with particularly substantial chainstays, bottom bracket and forks. This overbuild is relieved by thin, bowed seatstays, a feature of many of Norco's road bikes, which provide a degree of compliance.

There's good clearance around the forks and

seatstays, so mud build-up isn't an issue here. The clearance around the chainstays is a bit closer, but is alleviated by the absence of any protrusion behind the bottom bracket, so mud doesn't collect here either.

Norco claims a sub-kilogram frame weight and there are thru axles: 15mm at the front and 12x142mm at the rear. Cables are routed fully internally and there's a BB30 bottom bracket shell.

## Specification

Shifting on the Norco is handled by Shimano 105, with an 11-28 tooth cassette and an FSA Gossamer 46/36 double chainset. Like the Ridley, the Norco uses TRP Spyre mechanical disc brakes

with a 160mm rotor at the front and 140mm at the rear. Wheels are Norco own-brand, tubeless ready and come with Clement Crusade PDX 33mm tyres. All the other finishing kit is Norco own-brand and made of aluminium.

## Ride

The Norco is fun to ride both on road and off. On its Clement tyres, it rolls freely on tarmac and turning off road onto muddy tracks the tyres grip well. They clog up a bit in stickier mud, so there's loss of traction, but the mud clears quickly on more solid surfaces. The tyres' side lugs are well spaced and aggressive enough to ensure that side slip doesn't get out of control.

The chunky frame means that there's no energy lost from forward propulsion and the 105 gearing worked well, although I did get some mud build-up on the front mech. The Norco's TRP brakes are adequate, but not as effective as hydraulics and the effort required for longer use becomes a bit tiring.

## Value

Along with the Vitus, the Norco is more expensive than the two others on test. It's got a solid spec sheet, although at this price the use of mechanical Shimano 105 rather than SRAM hydraulic braking is a let-down. Shifting is crisper, but braking performance is paramount here.



8



## Verdict

Cyclo-cross bikes are increasingly popular as all-rounders.

I really liked the SRAM Rival 1 single ring set-up on the Raleigh and the Vitus. Although SRAM's double-tap shifting is not as smooth and takes more care to use than Shimano's 105, it continued to function well through mud and high water.

The hydraulic braking which comes with SRAM's set-up is also a boon. It

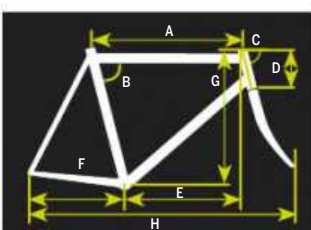
provides a lighter touch than the Spyre mechanicals, which I appreciated on longer off-road descents and the better modulation helps with control when negotiating obstacles.

I also found the SRAM levers and hoods more comfortable to hold over rough terrain than Shimano's and the high fronts, which hold the hydraulic pistons, provide a firm handhold too. That said, the Shimano 105 continued to function well throughout testing, both front and rear, and it does feel more precise than SRAM.

Which bike works best depends on what you intend to use it for. The Vitus is hard to beat as an out-and-out crosser but for an all-rounder with great handling, the Ridley is a great, lower-priced option.



The Vitus is the most genuine cross racer



Raleigh RX Pro		8
£1,500.00		
Frame	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Specification	■■■■■■■■■	9/10
Ride	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Value	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Distributor	www.raleigh.co.uk	
Frame	RX butted hydroformed aluminium alloy	
Fork	Raleigh C5 full carbon fork 15mm thru axle	
Size range	48-62cm	
Weight	9.73kg/21.45lb	
Groupset	SRAM Rival 1, SRAM S350 chainset	
Gear ratios	11-32t, 40t	
Wheels	Cole Rollen CX	
Brakes	SRAM Rival hydraulic	
Tyres	Schwalbe X1 35mm	
Bar	RSP+ alloy	
Stem	RSP+ alloy	
Seatpost	RSP+ alloy, 27.2mm	
Saddle	Sele Royal Sirio	

Ridley X-Bow 10		8
£1,199.99		
Frame	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Specification	■■■■■■■■■	7/10
Ride	■■■■■■■■■	9/10
Value	■■■■■■■■■	9/10
Distributor	www.madison.co.uk	
Frame	X-Bow Disc, 7005-T6 alloy	
Fork	Zornyc Disc carbon fork with alloy steerer	
Size range	XXS-XL	
Weight	10.47kg/23.08lb	
Groupset	Shimano 105, FSA Gossamer chainset	
Gear ratios	11-28t, 46/36t	
Wheels	Fulcrum Racing Sport	
Brakes	TRP Spyre mechanical	
Tyres	Challenge Grifo Comp 32mm	
Bar	4ZA alloy	
Stem	4ZA alloy	
Seatpost	4ZA alloy, 27.2mm	
Saddle	4ZA	

Vitus Energie Pro		9
£1,599.99		
Frame	■■■■■■■■■	9/10
Specification	■■■■■■■■■	9/10
Ride	■■■■■■■■■	9/10
Value	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Distributor	www.vitusbikes.com	
Frame	High-modulus T700 HM-UD carbon	
Fork	High-modulus T700 HM-UD full carbon, 15mm thru axle	
Size range	50-58cm	
Weight	8.95kg/19.73lb	
Groupset	SRAM Rival 1	
Gear ratios	11-32t/ 40t	
Wheels	WTB Frequency CX Team i19 TCS, Novatec hubs, front and rear thru axles, 142mm rear hub	
Brakes	SRAM Rival hydraulic	
Tyres	WTB Cross Wolf TCS, 32mm	
Bar	Vitus compact alloy	
Stem	Vitus alloy	
Seatpost	Vitus alloy, 27.2mm	
Saddle	Vitus	

Norco Threshold C 105		8
£1,599.99		
Frame	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Specification	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Ride	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Value	■■■■■■■■■	8/10
Distributor	www.evanscycles.com	
Frame	Threshold Mid-Mod Carbon	
Fork	Threshold mid-mod full Carbon, 15mm thru axle	
Size range	50.5-58cm	
Weight	9.51kg/20.97lb	
Groupset	Shimano 105, FSA Gossamer chainset	
Gear ratios	11-28t, 46/36t	
Wheels	A-Class CXD6 Tubeless Ready Design, front and rear thru axles, 142mm rear hub	
Brakes	TRP Spyre mechanical	
Tyres	Clement Crusade PDX 33mm	
Bar	Norco Compact	
Stem	Norco alloy	
Seatpost	Norco alloy, 27.2mm	
Saddle	Norco Cross Race, cro-mo rails	

SIZE TESTED: 56cm							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
56.0cm	73°	72.5°	15.0cm	38.5cm	42.8cm	57.0cm	102cm

SIZE TESTED: M							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
53.5cm	73°	72°	15cm	37.9cm	42.5cm	56cm	101.1cm

SIZE TESTED: 54cm							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
54.5cm	74°	71.5°	13.5cm	38.8cm	42.5cm	54.7cm	102.2cm

SIZE TESTED: 53cm							
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
53.8cm	74°	70.5°	13cm	37.9cm	42.5cm	55.2cm	100.8cm

# FITNESS

## How do I... Ride on rollers?

Get your pedalling up to speed with the trackies' favourite training tool

Words: Simon Smythe

**T**he turbo can't be beaten for churning out the type of short, high-intensity reps that are not easily or safely done on the road. But the rollers require balance, coordination and smoothness — and that's just to stay upright on them. Certainly the turbo is useful for working on strength and power, but regular sessions on the rollers can improve your pedalling efficiency and fluidity in a way that the turbo cannot. Programs such as Zwift, or any other type of distraction designed to keep turbo-tedium at bay, won't be required.

"The rollers are more interesting," says Dan Fleeman, director at Dig Deep Coaching ([digdeepcoaching.com](http://digdeepcoaching.com)). "If you're on a turbo, you can switch off and you're not going to crash. On rollers, you have to stay focused; you can't drift off."

Fleeman outlines how cadence drills on the rollers can help road riders: "Track riders ride rollers a lot and they've got really good cadence. But in a road race a lot of people get dropped because they can't accelerate. If you're going up a hill at 80rpm and someone throws in an attack or if you want to

attack, in order to accelerate, you've got to increase leg speed, then back off, then do it again.

"Going from a normal self-selected cadence, 80-85rpm, then all of a sudden 120 or 130 and then going back to normal — that's the sort of thing you can do on rollers."

Chris Froome's attacking style is probably the highest-profile illustration of how upping cadence rather than changing gear can have a devastating effect on rivals.

So how should you get started?

"The best way is to set yourself up in a doorway so you can lean against either side of the frame," says Fleeman. "I learned outside in the garden; I put a garden chair next to me and held on with one hand and had the other hand on the bars. Then I pedalled away till I got up to speed. When I got braver I put the other hand on the handlebars. But if I felt unstable I could just reach out and put my weight on the chair."

Another way is to get a helper to

hold your seatpost and head tube while you're getting up to speed.

As you gain confidence, they let go of the head tube, then the seatpost.

"It's the getting up to speed that's the struggle initially," advises Fleeman.

### Essential points

- Improve cadence and pedalling efficiency
- Learn a new skill and stay mentally fresh
- Do a fuff-free pre-race warm-up
- Show off by riding rollers no-handed

### Do: cadence work

Dig Deep Coaching's Dan Fleeman recommends this 'Russian steps' rollers workout: Do 30 seconds at around 130rpm then 30 seconds easy (normal cadence). Then do 45 seconds at 120 and 45 seconds easy. Then a minute at 110 and a minute easy. Then 45 seconds at 120 and 45 seconds easy. Then another 30 seconds at 130 and 30 recovery. Perform three sets with five minutes in-between. Do a 15-minute warm-up and 10-minute cool down. "Do that once a week and it will really help your change of cadence," says Fleeman.

### Do: use rollers to warm up

Rollers are perfect for pre-race warm-ups. With a turbo, a specific skewer must be used and ideally a turbo-specific tyre, since turbos shred road tyres. Prolonged roller riding would also destroy tyres, but 20 minutes of warming up won't, so it's possible to jump off the rollers and head straight to the start line without changing a thing. Set them up next to your car for starting and stopping.

### Do: focus on technique

Concentrate on pedalling in circles rather than shoving through the downstroke. The smoother your pedalling, the more stable the bike will feel on the rollers.

YOU  
SAY

Long ride Sunday? Rollers for recovery on Monday. Use them for fast legs and quality pedal stroke without pushing watts.

Paul Wright

Core stays engaged through the winter. Keeps you from zoning out and getting lazy.

Derek Lessard





#### Don't: look at your front wheel

If you look at your front wheel you'll find it hard to stay upright. Traditionally roller newbies are encouraged to put a bottle six feet in front of the rollers and to focus on it.

#### Don't: brake

Instead of using the brakes, just stop pedalling and allow the wheels to slow down on their own. Get ready to dismount or transfer your weight to the wall, chair, doorway as the gyroscopic effect diminishes.

Rollers give the most natural road feel, improve pedalling technique, and balance... Improves mental endurance as well as physical.

*Joshua David*

I use rollers mainly for the reason of not having to change the tyres; place the bike on them and off I go.

*Mark Hogan*

Once mastered, they're a must, enough said.

*Paddy Nolan*

Get used to hitting the deck.

*Matt Player*

## Things to try this week

### Kidney beans

Warming winter meals are a must-have as we enter the month of December. However, it is just as important to make sure the food you eat is as nutritious as that eaten during the rest of the year, while still adapting your tastes to the season. Kidney beans are not just useful to add a protein kick; their high fibre and mineral content are excellent for your digestive and immune systems too. What's more, they are cheap and easy to incorporate in a lot of meals. Make them a winter staple.

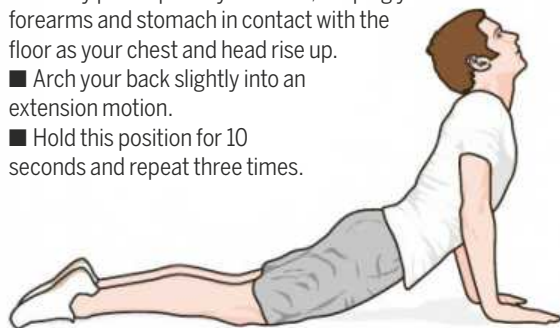


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### The sphinx stretch

Spending prolonged time in the saddle can result in your lower back and hips becoming overworked in the flexed position. To combat these effects the sphinx is a great way of stretching the hip flexors and reducing the tension in these muscles.

- Start the stretch off lying face down with your forearms supporting your weight on the floor.
- Gently push up with your arms, keeping your forearms and stomach in contact with the floor as your chest and head rise up.
- Arch your back slightly into an extension motion.
- Hold this position for 10 seconds and repeat three times.



### Stealth Protein energy gel

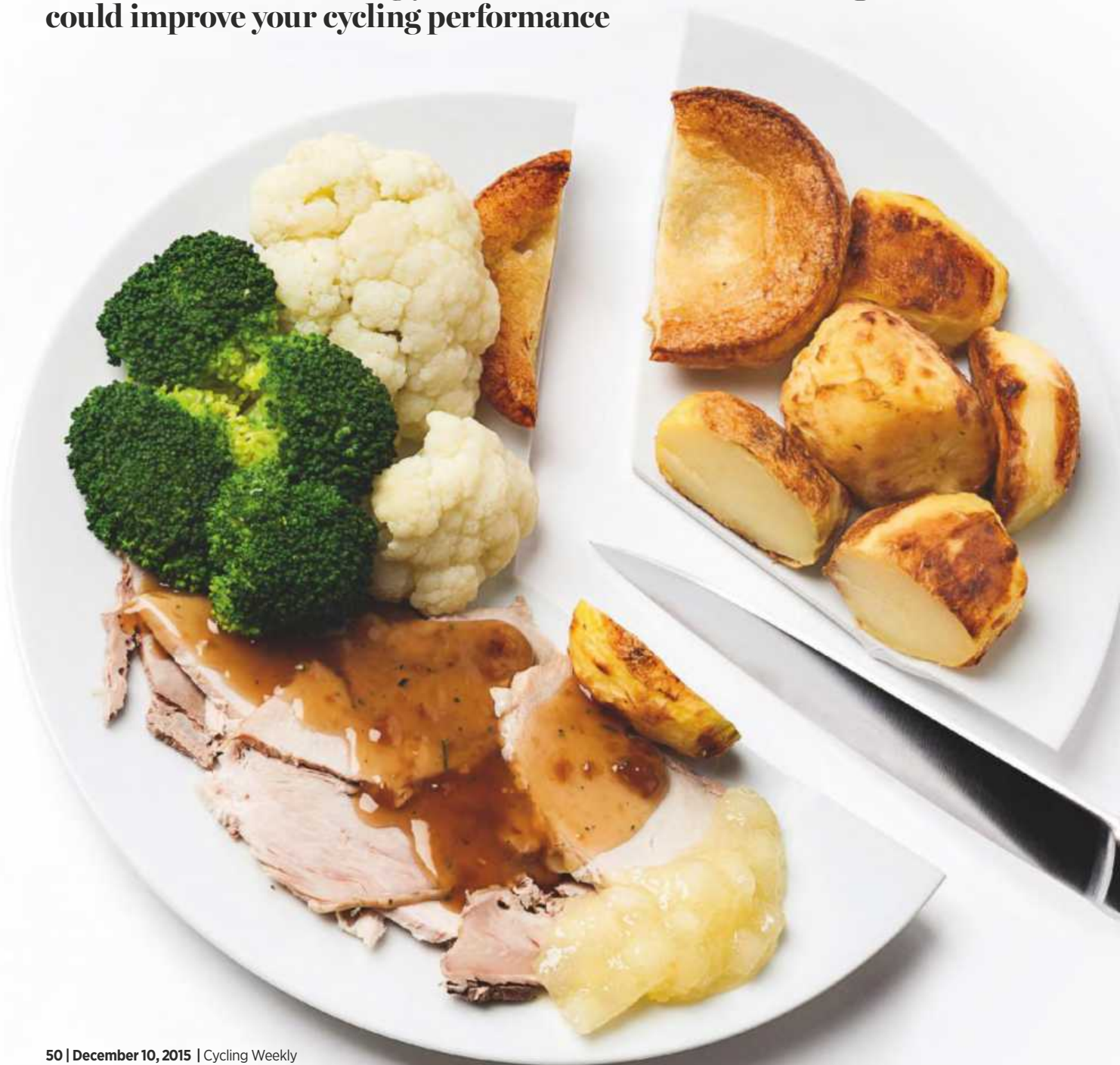


Protein replenishment is crucial to help repair damaged muscle fibres. It usually comes in the form of shakes, bars or regular food, but there is now a new way to get protein into your body. Stealth has designed a 60ml gel containing 20g of protein — similar to or more than most bars — with a watery consistency allowing for fast absorption. The gels come in berry flavour and are ideal to take towards the end of a ride to start the recovery process.

[www.secret-training.cc](http://www.secret-training.cc) £2.50 per gel

# Could cutting carbs make you faster?

As carbohydrate comes under fire on multiple fronts, *David Bradford* assesses whether slashing your intake of bread, cakes and potatoes could improve your cycling performance





**C**arbohydrate has been getting an especially bad rap of late. Since the Atkins diet 'revolution' of the Seventies, the attacks on carbs have continued via the South Beach diet, the Paleo diet and, more recently, hipsters' bearded chins have been zealously wagging about 'clean eating' while celeb chefs and health commentators line up to vilify sugar as lethal poison. As cyclists, we had assumed that anti-carb doctrine didn't apply to us — we needed carbs to fuel our training, and they didn't make us fat because we burned them off. But now even some sports scientists are shifting their position and arguing in favour of carb restriction. What is the truth about sweet and starchy foods as training fuel? Could cutting down on bread, pasta and sugary snacks really make us faster?

The most radical case for consuming (much) less carbohydrate as a way to improve performance comes from American scientists Dr Jeff Volek and Dr Stephen Phinney, who together published the book *The Art and Science of Low-Carbohydrate Performance*. Volek and Phinney claim that restricting carb intake to a paltry 50g per day over the long term necessitates adaptations that make the body far better at burning fat. In fact, this ultra-low-carb diet causes blood glucose levels to fall and forces the body into a state of ketosis, where ketone bodies produced from fatty acids in the liver become the main source of energy. The key potential advantage of being better at burning fat is that the body's reserves are vast: even a lean athlete has more than 30,000kcal-worth to draw on — compared to just 2,000kcal-worth of carbohydrate. If you can burn fat fast enough, the theory goes, you'll never hit the wall.

#### Rocket fuel

The problem with this theory is that the maximum rate of fat burning occurs at around 60 per cent of VO<sub>2</sub> max, i.e. moderate, conversational pace. As the effort level increases to racing intensity — typically in excess of 80 per cent of VO<sub>2</sub> max — our reliance on fat plummets to

## "Nutritional periodisation is the future"



James Morton, researcher at Liverpool John Moores University and lead nutritionist at Team Sky, sets out the case for day-to-day variation in carb intake

As you train and develop endurance, you build more mitochondria, the body's energy producing factories. What happens when you restrict carbohydrate is that you make more mitochondria, so the muscle becomes more endurance-trained — even though you've performed the same amount of work. In theory, this means you're in a position to oxidise carbohydrate and fat at a greater rate.

If you go on a low-carbohydrate diet all the time, your muscle learns only how to use fat. The problem is, at race-winning pace — in gears five and six, to use a driving analogy — you need to be using carbohydrate, because that's what makes you go fast.

below 30 per cent, while carbohydrate becomes our principal fuel source. This is basically because carbs are inherently more 'flammable' — they burn faster and more efficiently than fat. Think of it like this: fat is your body's bedrock of charcoal whereas carbohydrate is its canister of kerosene. When you need to burn at your brightest and fastest, you need to switch to carbs — and that's biologically non-negotiable.

Despite this fact, Volek and Phinney maintain that a tightly carb-restricted diet can enhance performance. I contacted Volek and asked him to explain how a diet containing minimal carbohydrate was meant to benefit racing cyclists who relied on carbs as their principal fuel source.

"Higher-intensity sports or events may require different fuelling requirements," he conceded. "Having said that, most sports involve some type of aerobic component in-between sprints. Moreover, the benefits of an LCHF [low-carb, high-fat] diet may extend beyond simply a fuelling mechanism. "Improved body composition, less

You need muscle that can switch between using carbohydrate and using fat. We're looking into how to periodise low-carbohydrate training alongside high-carbohydrate training, because we think you need to do both. We don't yet know exactly the pattern this periodisation should follow, but we think it's day-by-day depending on the intensity and duration of your training session on that particular day. The exact level would depend on the individual, based on how well they can tolerate restricted carbohydrate, i.e. maintain training intensity at the intended workload; on an easy day, a rider may find they are able to cope fine on a substantially reduced carb intake.

Working out the best form of periodisation is something we're trying to do in our research. We're beginning to rewrite the guidelines as we become more aware of the benefits of this approach. Nutritional periodisation is the future of sports nutrition.

inflammation and oxidative stress, faster recovery, and improved health parameters are all reasons an athlete may consider an LCHF diet, especially if they have some underlying insulin resistance."

The headline performance claim from Volek and Phinney's book is that athletes adapted to a very low-carb diet

may be able to double or even quadruple their maximum fat-burning rate to as much as 2g per minute (previous studies on those following a normal diet indicated an average maximum fat-burning rate of around 0.5g per minute). Clearly, if you are able to burn fat three times faster, it stands

to reason that you would spare more carbohydrate and, in a very long event such as a 100-mile-plus sportive, be able to sustain your goal pace for longer.

The major hitch for Volek and Phinney is that their claims of improved performance are as yet supported by very little hard evidence. "Only a single prolonged ketogenic [ultra-low-carb diet] athlete study measuring performance has been published," explains Dr Trent Stellingwerff, physiologist at the

**"Fat is your body's bedrock of charcoal. Carbohydrate is its canister of kerosene"**

## “Cutting down on carbs left me deadbeat”



Sports physiologist Nick Tiller, 33, attempted to improve his own performance by consuming less carbohydrate, but it proved an energy restriction too far

After reading about the reported benefits of low-carb diets on performance, I decided to give it a try myself. In ultra-distance races, the ability to burn fat is key. I knew it was important to moderate rather than eliminate carbs altogether, so I usually started the day with a fasted-state training session followed by a breakfast of porridge with nuts or protein powder. For the rest of the day, the only carbs I ate were from fruit and vegetables, avoiding pasta, potatoes and rice, while maintaining protein intake.

However, I found myself becoming progressively more fatigued. The moderate-carb diet had worked OK while merely keeping active, but proved insufficient as soon as my mileage increased. Hard sessions were near-impossible while eating this way; I simply lacked the energy. I felt as though carrying on in this depleted state would have led to illness and injury.

Now I carefully manage my carbs depending on my energy demands; if I'm taking it easy, I focus on meat and veg, nuts and grains, whereas if I'm training long or hard, I'll include a carb-rich component such as pasta.

Canadian Sport Institute Pacific. In this study, conducted in 1983, athletes following the ultra-low-carb diet managed a ride for on average four minutes longer (151min versus 147min) before reaching exhaustion. However, this was largely because of one low-carb outlier who rode for 232min; three of the subjects on a normal diet rode for longer than 151 minutes.

“The entire thesis of ketogenesis and athlete performance is currently referenced from this single paper,” Stellingwerff reiterates. “These studies are difficult to undertake, but this one has a few flaws: it used only five subjects; the ‘performance’ test was a ride to exhaustion conducted at 64 per cent VO<sub>2</sub> max, not a race-level effort, so irrelevant to competitive athletes.”

The other big problem for LCHF proponents is the evidence from ‘in the field’; that is, the knowledge that current elite athletes succeed on high-carb diets. The daily food intake of pro cyclists — as regularly profiled in this magazine — invariably contains lots of carb-rich foods such as porridge, pasta and energy products. To take a more extreme example, a 2004 study on a group of male elite Kenyan runners found that their diet consisted of 77 per cent carbohydrate and just 13 per cent fat — totally contrary to the proportions advocated by the LCHF brigade.

Additional noteworthy observations from this study were that 86 per cent of the athletes’ energy intake derived from

vegetable sources — mostly basic staples such as rice and maize in the form of ugali (a type of porridge); a whopping 20 per cent of total daily calories came from sugar (the NHS recommends five per cent added sugar); and meat accounted for just one per cent of energy intake. Of course, a Kenyan elite runner’s diet may not be ideal for an amateur cyclist, but the point is, it supports a very high level of performance — despite being somewhat rudimentary and very high in carbohydrate. Why would you want to follow a diet completely at odds with that of elite endurance athletes?

There is, in fact, one very good reason: to lose weight. The uncomfortable truth is that many of us eat more calories than we need, and often much of the excess comes in the form of carb-rich foods such as cakes, biscuits, bread, etc. The study on Kenyan runners mentioned above noted that, during the week-long assessment period, the athletes ate on average 620kcal per day less than they expended, resulting in weight loss of around 0.6kg. They may have been eating carb-dense foods, but they weren’t eating them in huge quantities. It may be the case that regularly slipping into a calorie deficit is how these whippet-thin athletes maintain the very low body weight — 59kg average among the study group — that is undoubtedly vital to their success.

### Individual needs

So, what is the optimum amount of carbohydrate to consume? Unfortunately,

## Carb strategies: latest guidelines\*

When?	How much? (carbohydrate in g; kg refers to body weight)	Why?
General, day-to-day	Periodise according to each day’s training intensity and volume. On easy days, benefit may accrue from reducing carb intake to as little as 2.5g/kg/day. Experiment cautiously to begin with.	Restricting carb intake while training has been shown to increase production of mitochondria, thus boosting metabolic efficiency.
Carb-loading in days leading up to and immediately before an event	In the 2-3 days prior to event, aim to consume up to 10-12g/kg/day. In the 1-4hr prior to event, aim to consume 1-4g/kg.	Likely to be effective in very challenging events of at least 90min, in which glycogen stores would otherwise run out.
Carb intake during an event	During events lasting 1-2.5hrs, consume 30-60g/hr; during events longer than 2.5hr, consume up to 90g/hr.	Likely to be effective in events lasting longer than 1hr 15min, in which glycogen stores may otherwise run low. Also likely to be effective in events lasting 45-75min by enhancing pacing strategy via effect on ‘reward centres’ in the brain.

\*Source: ‘Re-examining high-fat diets for sports performance’, Louise M. Burke, Sports Med, Springerlink.com, 2015.





there is no definitive answer; it depends on many individual factors, including your energy expenditure (how hard you are training), your body's sensitivity to carbohydrate (insulin control), the specific demands of your goal events, and your body composition aims. Professor Louise Burke, head of sports nutrition at the Australian Institute of Sport, recently published a comprehensive review of the literature on the effectiveness of LCHF diets for sports performance. She points out that adapting to a low-carb diet, though it may enhance the body's ability to burn fat, compromises the supply of glycogen and the ability to perform high-intensity exercise.

Burke draws attention to the fact that, in a sport like competitive cycling, an athlete needs to optimise multiple fuel systems to meet the demands of changes in pace.

"The terrain, pacing strategies, and tactical elements mean that brief but critical parts of the race that often determine the outcome, such as breakaways, surges, etc. are conducted at higher and often near-maximal pace."

At this intense, do-or-die pace, it is necessary to burn carbohydrate as quickly and efficiently as possible; in terms of energy systems, you need to be

a master of all trades, as Burke explains: "For optimal competition performance, the athlete needs a combination of adequate fuel stores in relation to the demands of his or her event, as well as metabolic flexibility."

That is the key term well worth repeating: metabolic flexibility, the ability to burn the right fuel at the right time, at the optimal rate. Burke is keen to move away from an us-versus-them dichotomy of high-carb versus low-carb towards a more nuanced understanding (see periodisation advice, p51). The body's huge supply of fat, relative to carbohydrate, is not sufficient reason to shun the raft of research supporting the critical importance of carbohydrate to athletic performance.

"There should not be a choice of one fuel or the other," concludes Burke. "This is not 'black versus white' but rather a desire to integrate and individualise the various dietary factors that can contribute to optimal sports performance." ■

## "Low-carb, high-fat worked for me"



**Veteran cyclist and runner Stewart Pepper, 56, cut back dramatically on carbs two years ago, and hasn't looked back**

I became interested in the low-carb, high-fat diet after hearing a presentation by Professor Tim Noakes, who explained how LCHF had turned his health around after he was diagnosed as pre-diabetic. I was intrigued because my wife, Ali, is a type-1 diabetic, and I wondered if she could benefit in terms of insulin control. So together, in October 2013, we began to reduce our carb intake, and we haven't looked back.

Nowadays we keep carby foodstuffs to a minimum: no potatoes, rice, pasta, bread, fruit juice or cereals. We replaced the missing components with nuts, dairy (full-fat yoghurt and cheese mainly), spiralized vegetables (courgette, celeriac), mash made from cauliflower or celeriac and non-flour bread; this means I eat less than 100g of carbs per day.

After making the transition, I was less hungry despite consuming less volume. There were no pronounced ill effects. In terms of training, I discovered that I could sustain the longer efforts well, especially at lower intensities. Race performances were just as good, and overall I am achieving similar age-grade performances.

I have noticed that, if I race on low-carb without pre-race or carb-loading at all, my ability to exercise at the higher intensities is compromised. Generally, on the low-carb routine, I am feeling leaner, healthier and mentally more alert. I notice a better regulation of hunger throughout the day as well as body weight and body 'shape'. I am not bloated in the way I used to be and am consistently three or four pounds lighter.

Ali, meanwhile, has found that her blood sugar levels have remained remarkably stable and she has an HbA1c [glycated haemoglobin] reading that's usually as good as a healthy non-diabetic. Her consultant has been really pleased with her.

# Chris Opie

## My week in training

One Pro Cycling's Chris Opie spoke to *Cycling Weekly* about his training in preparation for stepping up to UCI Pro Continental level next year

**Date:** November 9-15, 2015 | **Location:** Oxfordshire, UK

Paul Knott

**C**hris Opie started his professional career at UK Youth in 2012, and the team enjoyed a number of noteworthy results before folding at the end of the 2013 season. For 2014, he moved to Rapha-Condor-JLT for a successful Tour Series winning campaign.

As a founding rider with the One Pro Cycling team, currently in their debut year, Opie's biggest win came at the Stockton GP. At the time of our interview, it had just been announced that One Pro Cycling are to step up to Pro Continental level for next season, and Opie relished the chance to talk about the new opportunities this would open up to him.

"This is why I took up cycling, to ride the races that we will be doing next season," he said.

### Monday

All my training sessions are set by my coach Steve Benton; he has coached me since August 2010. If it wasn't for Steve, I genuinely would not be racing my bike anymore. I went out for four hours with Dexter Gardias [One Pro Cycling teammate], just steady riding concentrating on leg speed and keeping my average cadence around 90-100rpm and around a Zone 1-3 effort. That averaged out at around 249W over the four hours. That's not that much, as over the summer my longest ride was six hours 40 minutes.

### Tuesday

Today I was able to do three hours' mountain biking in Zone 2 to 3. I don't have a power meter on my mountain bike, so it removes the temptation to fixate on the figures or be overly locked

in to what you are doing. It's a little bit more relaxed and enjoyable and you can have a bit more fun with it. I still make sure I have some sort of structured session by including eight two-minute intervals in the second hour.

### WE SAY

Riding a mountain bike in the winter months not only clears the mind by taking on more varied terrain, but it can also improve your cycling skills when you head back out on the road. It is well known that mountain biking improves your bike-handling, and it can also boost your top-end power and pedalling efficiency.

### Wednesday

I did an hour's gentle ride with my wife, which I classified as a recovery ride at Zone 1 effort. I do a lot of stretching

after each session for around 20-35 minutes. It's something I've always done. Steve encourages it as well; it has always been something that has been hammered home to me.

### WE SAY

Despite the ongoing debate about whether or not stretching offers benefits to performance, it is a habit many professional riders value as an important element in their training — and who are we to argue?

### Thursday

Four hours on the road at predominantly Zone 1-3, again. This includes self-selected gears and cadence, but with three separate efforts in the last three hours of between 12 and 20 minutes.

### Friday

I went for another mountain biking session. It's quite rare for me to do two mountain bike rides in a week. Generally I don't ride my mountain bike during the season, other than for recovery and to practise doing wheelies. This session was three hours, fartlek-style ride, so wasn't too strict, but I wasn't easing off too much.

### WE SAY

Fartlek training consists of informal intervals, working the aerobic and anaerobic energy systems. This type of training can be particularly useful in the winter months when your riding motivation may be at its lowest, and when more structured sessions seem too daunting. Fartlek training can be adapted for a specific goal but allow the flexibility to be spontaneous.

### Saturday

I went for a four-hour group ride. Where I



**Chris Opie**

■ Age: 28

■ Discipline: Road

■ Best results: 1st Stockton GP 2015, 2nd Rutland-Melton International CiCLE Classic 2015, six Tour Series 2015 top-10 finishes.





Opie's focused on the forthcoming season

train, it's quite easy to meet up with other riders such as Dexter, George Harper and Yanto Barker. We are all within an hour's ride of each other, which is helpful, as we all have the same coach this year. It is nice to have company, but some days I need to go out and do the ride myself, such as when they are on a different schedule or doing a different race.

#### WE SAY

Having team-mates who share the same coach living nearby gives Opie the perfect training structure. Not only is it nice to have company on rides, it is also beneficial in allowing the

One team-mates to push each other in training.

#### Sunday

Recently I've requested to have Sundays off so my wife can go on her club run while I look after the kids. It's nice because we met through cycling, and since we've had kids she's not really had the chance to ride. It's not a big week and not overly strict at the moment but it will get progressively stricter with the intervals and intensity. Compared to the summer, it is quite easy psychologically. We had to cover 230km one day and then

do 200km the next as a minimum for the Tour of Britain build-up. Once you've done a few of those weeks, everything else is a lot easier and you become a lot stronger psychologically.

#### WE SAY

Despite it being the off-season, with a noticeable drop in mileage compared to the sharp end of the season, Opie is still racking up substantial time in the saddle. It's important to make sure that your training plan is adapted around your season goals and you increase and decrease your training accordingly to ensure you are in peak condition when needed.

# Is blackcurrant the new beetroot?

## Study backs berry extract as a natural performance booster

Blackcurrants are rich in polyphenols, one group of which — the anthocyanins — confer health benefits through anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects. Studies also show that blackcurrants can improve blood-flow and reduce oxidative stress, attributes that could be beneficial to cyclists.

Anthocyanins reach their maximum concentration in the bloodstream less than two hours after consumption, and their related metabolites remain in the blood for at least two days, so the idea that short-term blackcurrant supplementation might boost exercise performance seemed feasible. This has now been supported by a recent study.

Researchers at the University of Chichester hypothesised that New Zealand blackcurrant extract (NZBC) would improve endurance performance, increase fat oxidation and alter lactate responses during recovery. Fourteen trained endurance athletes (male) consumed 300mg of NZBC

extract per day or a placebo for seven days. On day seven, the cyclists completed 3x10min bouts of exercise, each at a different intensity, then undertook a 16.1km time trial with lactate sampling during a passive recovery.

The results, published in the *European Journal of Applied Physiology* (2015, 115: 2357-2365) showed that consuming NZBC extract substantially increased fat oxidation when cycling at 65 per cent of VO2max, and improved the time-trial performance by 2.4 per cent.

In addition, during the recovery period plasma lactate was higher with NZBC immediately after the time trial. This could be due to altered transport of lactate across cell membranes or its increased removal by improved blood flow.

It's hypothesised that the mechanism by which NZBC exerts its positive effect on performance may be due to improved functioning of the endothelium, which lines the inside of blood vessels.



Improve your time trial with blackcurrants

www.welovemaple.co.uk

Great for...

On-bike carb boost

# Granola bars

**W**hy buy granola energy bars when you can make your own? Following this recipe also means you'll know exactly what is going into your body when you're out on the bike. When it comes to granola oats, you can't go wrong with the high vitamin and mineral content, plus they're an excellent way of replenishing carbohydrate stores.

### NUTRITION PER BAR:

**179**

kcalories

**22g**

carbohydrates

**4g**

protein

**8g**

fat







### METHOD

- 1) Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a 9in x 13in baking pan with foil. Butter foil.
- 2) In a large bowl combine oats, flour, wheat germ, pecans, salt, brown sugar, cranberries and cinnamon.
- 3) In a small bowl whisk eggs well. Add maple syrup, melted butter and vanilla and whisk until well combined.
- 4) Pour egg mixture into dry ingredients and mix gently until moistened, do not over-mix.
- 5) Press into prepared pan and bake for 25 minutes or until set.
- 6) Allow to cool, and cut into bars.

### INGREDIENTS

- Butter for pan
- 280g oats
- 105g flour
- 2 tbsp wheat germ
- 57.5g pecans, chopped & toasted
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 56g packed brown sugar
- 175g dried cranberries
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 large eggs
- 112ml maple syrup
- 142g butter, melted & cooled
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

**Time  
taken:  
25min**

## TAKE-HOME TRAINING SESSION

### Turbo-training

With the Christmas party season in full swing and daylight in short supply, most of us are likely to find ourselves in need of a short, sharp indoor session — just like this one

Lengthy turbo-training sessions can be a daunting prospect. However, short, high-intensity efforts can add variety and break up the session psychologically, making them easier to bear than more regular intervals.

Start off the session with a 10min warm-up that slowly builds to a Zone 3 effort. This more intense warm-up is required because the session's efforts are intense from the start. The main session consists of

**Time  
taken:  
33min**

efforts that last for varying amounts of time between 30sec and two minutes. These will most likely be completed at a Zone 4 effort.

Attack each interval fully, right up until the Zone 2 recovery efforts. If you start to struggle early on, decrease your effort for the remaining intervals to ensure you complete the session. Finish off with a 10min cool-down.

Cut out or write down this session and tape it to your stem so you can keep track of the intervals.

Time (minutes)	Zone
0-10	1-3
10-11	4
11-11:15	2
11:15-12:15	4
12:15-12:45	2
12:45-14:45	4
14:45-15:15	2
15:15-17:15	4
17:15-18:15	2
18:15-20:15	4
20:15-20:45	2
20:45-21:45	4
21:45-22:15	2
22:15-22:45	4
22:45-23	2
23-33	1-2

Effort	You can	It feels like you're...	Use it for...	% Max heart rate	% FT power
Easy Zone 1	Chat freely	Warming up	Warm-ups, cool-downs and recovery	60-65%	56-75%
Steady Zone 2	Speak one sentence at a time	Riding along in the bunch on the flat	Long rides	65-75%	76-90%
Brisk Zone 3	Speak a few words at a time	Breathing deeply and working hard	Long efforts of 10 to 20min	75-82%	91-105%
Hard Zone 4	Say only one word at a time	Really attacking (perhaps on a climb)	Efforts lasting 2-8min	82-89%	106-120%
Very hard Zone 5	Grunt and gasp	Sprinting	Efforts lasting less than 2min	89%-MHR	121%+



# Wiggle Ashdown Sportive

**CW**  
Difficulty  
rating:  
6/10

**Next  
year's  
event:  
March 5**



**68  
miles**

**1,585  
metres  
ascent**

## A small taste of alpine fare, deep in the heart of Sussex

**T**he Ashdown Forest is packed with fantastic scenery and more than a few climbs. It's even got the approval of the pros, with former Tour yellow jersey wearer Sean Yates having used this area as a training ground — Yates lived in Forest Row throughout his career and was often seen out riding on these roads. So it may not come as a surprise when we advise you to bring your climbing legs. It really is a great mix of riding, ideal for an early-season challenge. ▶

### Where is it?

Set in the heart of Sussex, the route starts at the South of England Centre in Ardingly, just outside Hayward's Heath. Heading through West and East Sussex, the route takes in one of the UK's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: Ashdown Forest.

### Why ride it?

Early March in southern England: the days are getting longer, the weather is getting warmer, and the first signs of spring are beginning to come through. Add to that the combination of excellent scenery and challenging climbs and it all makes this a very attractive option.

### History

2015 was the first year for the Ashdown Forest Sportive and it proved to be a hugely popular ride with the 750 riders rolling up to the start line. This cemented it as a regular on the early-season sportive calendar. 2016 will see 1,000 places available to riders.





### How to enter

Entry is through the event website [www.ukcyclingevents.co.uk](http://www.ukcyclingevents.co.uk), at £35. Entry is available on the day if the ticket allocation is not sold out (surcharge applies).

### HQ details

Starting at the South of England Centre in Ardingly, West Sussex, the event is easily accessible by car via the M23 or A272. Follow signs for Haywards Heath and then Ardingly. The nearest major train station is in Haywards Heath (five miles from the start).

### Where to stay

If you've got money to burn check out Gravetye Manor, an exquisite hotel that also boasts a Michelin Star restaurant. Ardingly Inn is just next to the event start with good food available in the bar. There is a Travlodge nine miles away from the start, in Hickstead, or you could try the Cider House or Longacres Croft bed and breakfasts.

### Where to eat

The Stand-Up does excellent Thai food or for a full carb hit, try Paulino Italian Restaurant, both in Lindfield. The Gardeners Arms is a gastro pub in Ardingly and there is also the Cat in Sharpthorne.

### Local bike shop

Haywards Heath Cycle Centre, near the train station, is the closest bike shop to the event.



**Feat of engineering:**  
Ardingly Viaduct

Starting from the South of England Centre in Ardingly, West Sussex, there's a great false flat to Turners Hill that is sure to warm you up even if the early March weather doesn't. Once the road flattens you'll be treated to the first of many excellent views of the South Downs. Just pay attention to the road surface, as it is a bit uneven, especially around the school at Handcross.

The descent through Staplefield towards the River Ouse is perfect for barrelling along. We tucked in to pick up maximum speed taking us into the first proper climb and test of the day: Holmstead Hill. Take it easy though, as there's a lot of climbing to come. At the top, take in the scene across Cuckfield Golf Course to Ashdown Forest — it's a view of what's to come.

Ashdown Forest is the home of that well-loved children's character, Pooh Bear. While we didn't see any bears on our autumnal recce we did spot a few deer grazing among the foliage, which briefly took our minds off the numerous back-to-back climbs.

En route to Ashdown Forest you will pass Ardingly Reservoir, where you might spot a few early-morning sailors out enjoying the 198-acre body of water. Keep one eye on the road to avoid the potholes on the descent after you pass through Balcombe, and keep the other eye on the beautifully impressive architecture of Ardingly Viaduct, as you approach the reservoir.

### The Wall awaits

The fast descent to Friar's Gate that follows is on good roads so enjoy the speed, especially as after Friar's Gate a series of punchy climbs await. Pace yourself on these as, of course, the sting is in the last of them, which ramps up to 11 per cent.

It is after Hartfield that we found ourselves tackling the most challenging climbs. On event day this is after the feed, so make sure you stock up so you have the energy to tackle the 21 hilly miles that remain. Be sure to recover on the descents as the climbs come back-to-back until Weir Wood Reservoir. This challenging run also includes the infamous climb of 'the Wall' or Kidd's Hill. It's just under a mile long with an average gradient of nine per cent but it's the type of consistent climb you can get into and really find your pace. There's a narrow bridge on the descent to be aware of, so keep your wits about you.

Winding up through the tress on Vowels Lane, to Gravetye Manor, almost made us wish the route was a few miles shorter. But, keep going: the finish is just around the corner. You'll certainly know if your winter training has been effective.

#### ORGANISER'S TARGET TIMES

Route	Award	Distance	Ave speed (men)	Time	Avg speed (women)	Time
Epic	Gold	68	>15.5mph	<4hr23m	>14.5mph	<4hr41m
Epic	Silver	68	>14mph	<4hr51m	>13mph	<5hr13m
Epic	Bronze	68	<14mph	>4hr51m	<13mph	>5hr13m
Standard	Gold	51	>15.5mph	<3hr17m	>14.5mph	<3hr31m
Standard	Silver	51	>14mph	<3hr38m	>13mph	<3hr55m
Standard	Bronze	51	<14mph	>3hr38m	<13mph	>3hr55m



# The challenges

## 1 Holmstead Hill

Carry your speed from the Staplefield descent into this. The first climb of the day hits eight per cent in the middle. You'll know if you're on for a good day or not after this.

## 2 Vowels Lane

1.5 miles long and averaging four per cent, it's the constantly changing gradient between flat and steep that poses the real test here — and the 13 per cent section in the middle.

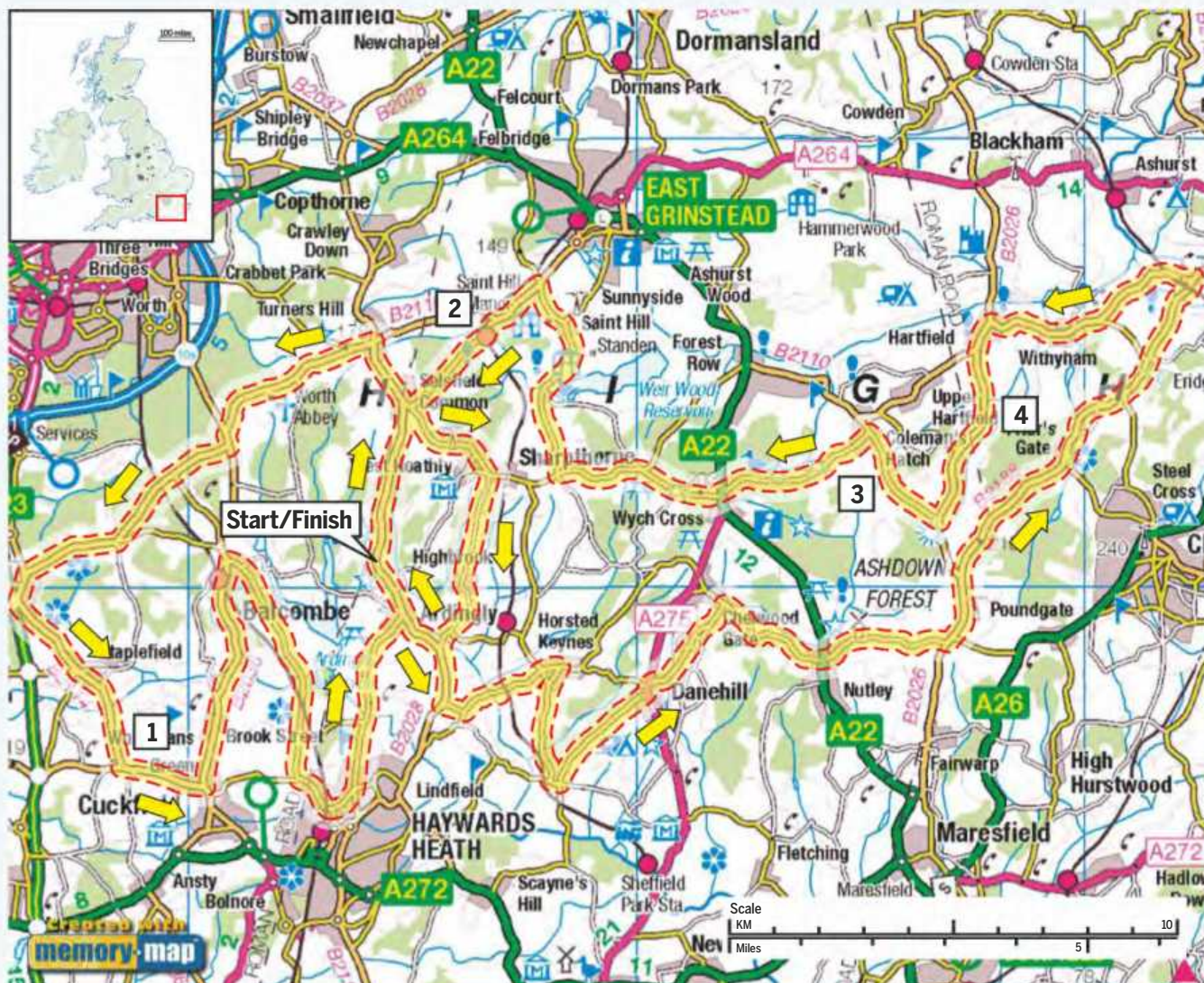
## 3 Colmans Hatch

2.5 miles long, and averaging four per cent, this is a real test of the legs. The first section is the worst (12 per cent) before easing off to a long false flat that drags on.

# NAIL IT

## 4 Chuck Hatch Road

Immediately after the second feed station is a steep hill of half a mile. Enjoy this because the next climb is even worse. Two miles long and averaging five per cent, the road immediately rises to eight per cent for a few hundred metres before flattening off briefly. Enjoy the respite as what follows is nine per cent, a short rest, then three per cent before a kick up to 12 per cent. From there the end is in sight but the road will still be around four per cent for at least another half a mile. If the climb doesn't take your breath away the view from the top will. Careful going down Kidd's Hill!



Event website [www.ukcyclingevents.co.uk/events/wiggle-ashdown-sportive/](http://www.ukcyclingevents.co.uk/events/wiggle-ashdown-sportive/)

# Stockton Wheelers Cycling Club

**This progressive North-East club has a track record of developing elite cyclists and enthusiastic amateurs.**  
*Chris Marshall-Bell* hears about its colourful history

## Club facts

**Based:** Stockton-on-Tees  
**Members:** 312; **Formed:** 1916  
**Meets:** Sundays at 9.30am, usually at Myton House Farm Pub, Ingleby Barwick (check website); **Thursdays** 6.40am for 10-mile time trial at Long Newton; various locations for women-specific rides; **Saturdays** 9.30am at Middlesbrough Cycle Circuit for youth coaching.

**S**pend a day with the Stockton Wheelers and you repeatedly get the impression that this is a club steeped in know-how and prestige.

In the morning, upwards of 80 children are being coached around the 1km Middlesbrough Cycle Circuit, a sizeable number of whom sport the club's yellow and blue jersey. Across the facility, at the recently opened Middlesbrough Velodrome, the club's older members are being coached on the track, and racing one another.

An hour or two later about 50 riders go out for the weekend club ride, a run around the North Yorkshire countryside that is

punctuated with laughter.

The club's riders know they are wearing a jersey of a club that will be celebrating its centenary next year, has developed world class cyclists and, says racing secretary Doug Howes, has also become "the leading club in the north".

Paul Curran, multiple national champion and Commonwealth Games gold medallist, started at the club in the 1980s and is a regular at club meets.

Matt Woods raced in Italy from 2012 to 2014, Scott Auld races in Europe with Zappi's, while time trial supremo Josh Teasdale has split the past four years between the UK scene and racing in Belgium.

The trio of protégés all achieved their dream of racing on the Continent after years of training sessions each Saturday morning.

So Howes's contention is not arrogance, rather a reflection of the club's history and how it is versed in delivering grassroots success, participation and enjoyment.

Alan Goodwin, the social secretary, says: "We have Islabikes for the kids to learn how to ride a bike on. If they carry on until they are 70, great; if they stop when they are 15, no problem — as long as we've ensured that they've enjoyed the bike."

## Rivalry

Stockton Wheelers is a

well-known name across the country's cycling circles, their time trials often attracting the best against the clock.

The club has a friendly rivalry with its neighbour, Cleveland Wheelers. For two weeks with the Wheelers' summer 10 series, riders of both clubs ride each other's events and there is a trophy for the club with the combined fastest five times.

As it approaches its centenary, its appetite for staging races is strong. It is hosting the RTTC 100-mile National Championships in July, a few weeks after it plays a role in the 2016 National Road Race and Time Trial Championships.

It is hoped that the latter

## History

The club was formed in March 1916 when 14 cyclists met at the Stockton Arms Hotel and, after a few beers, decided to form a cycling club.

The first time trial, a 25, was held in 1920 and the first 100-miler was staged in 1947 — won by Britain's first Tour de France finisher, Brian Robinson. His brother Desmond won the following year's edition.

The club continues to be active in the time trialling scene, hosting the National 100-mile Championships next year. It stages seven time trialling events covering all distances, the pick of which is a hill-climb that finishes within 100

yards of England's highest pub, Tan Hill. It plays an active part in the Elite Road Series race each July and will be organising, hosting and marshalling events at the 2016 National Road Race and Time Trial Championships in June.

Two sportives are organised annually costing £5 for a 70km or 105km ride; on at least two week-end in the year, weekend club riders support local charities. The summer months see longer rides, including the coast to coast, with women-specific and mixed group tours.

A Go-Ride Club, it has always had a large membership, and due to the diverse activities now

offered, and the club's thriving junior section, the number of members has reached a record high. Since 2009, there has been a trebling of numbers, with 169 senior members and 143 under-18s — 46 of whom are girls — taking part in coaching sessions at the Middlesbrough Cycle Circuit.

## Achievements

■ Paul Curran, the 1987 British road race champion who also won the Commonwealth Games Road Race in 1986, among a number of national titles on the road and track, joined the club aged 14 and still attends rides

■ Josh Teasdale was the 2014 national closed circuit time trial champion.

■ The club has won the Stockton Borough Council club of the year and its members have been awarded coaching and volunteering accolades.









# Stockton Wheelers club run

## Ride highlights

### 1 Faceby Road

Despite the North York Moors postcode, undulations are surprisingly absent. But the hills are on the horizon, as you ride along a narrow, flat road in anticipation of the National Park's stingers.

### 2 Dibdale Bank

The ride's best climb comes out of Neasham and takes place under a tree canopy, with the road inclining steadily to the top.

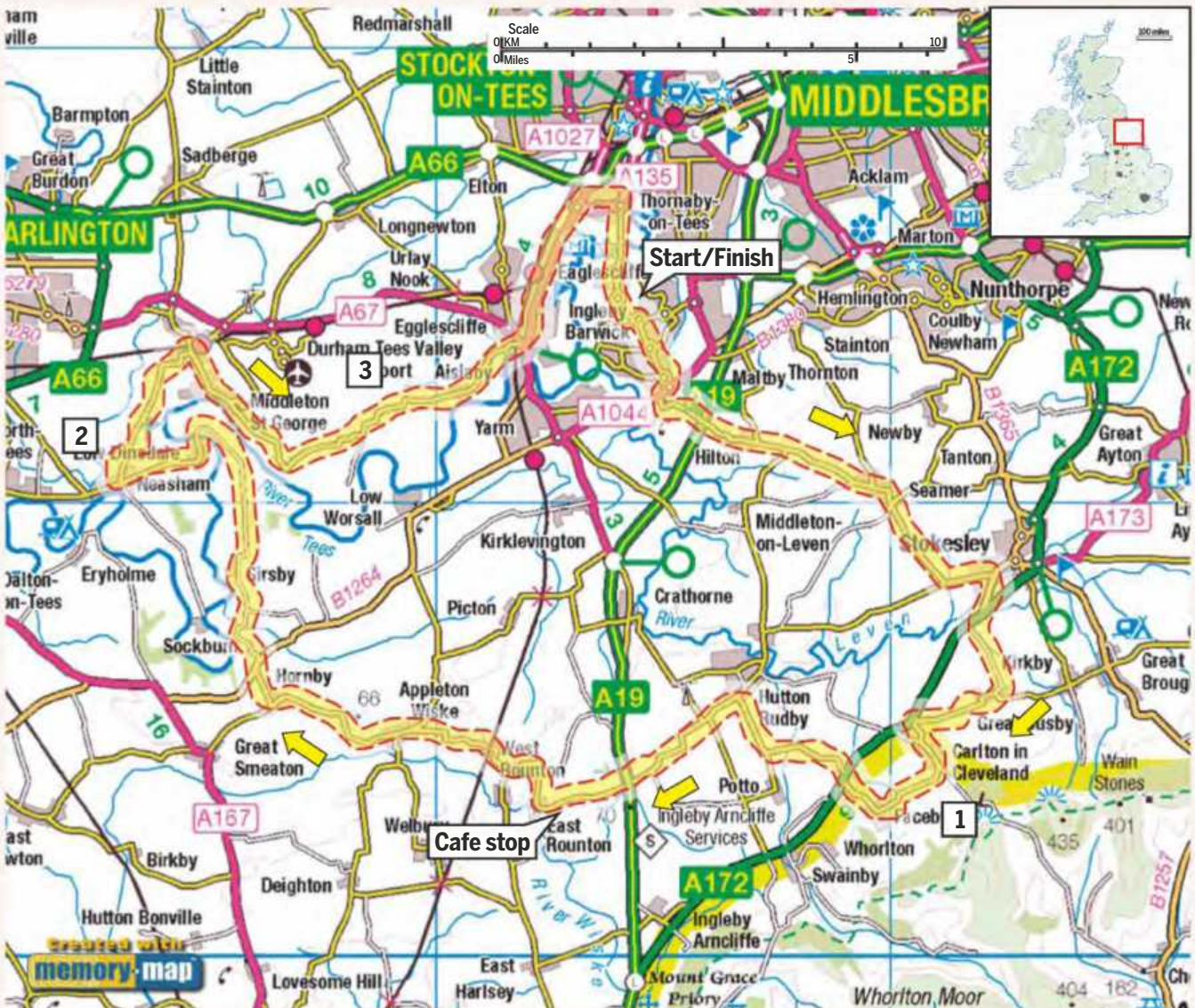
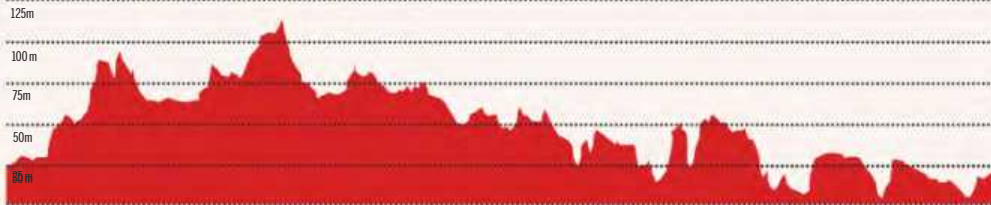
### 3 Middleton St George to Yarm

North-East's hidden secret: five miles of narrow, twisting road recently resurfaced. There are a few troughs and peaks, but the real joy is the lack of cars, which permits fast and thrilling riding.

### Favourite cafe

#### Roots Cafe

Home Farm, East Rounton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 2LE. 01609 882480. [www.rootsfarmshop.co.uk](http://www.rootsfarmshop.co.uk)  
The club's cafe of choice is a popular haunt for local cyclists and residents alike who want to sample the area's finest produce. The bikes rest in cycle racks and riders spread out across the quaint courtyard backing onto the cafe and farm.







Down time at the Roots Cafe

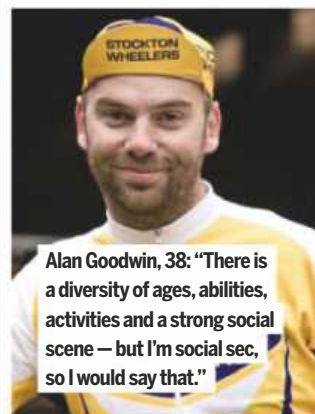


A smile hides the effort of a club ride

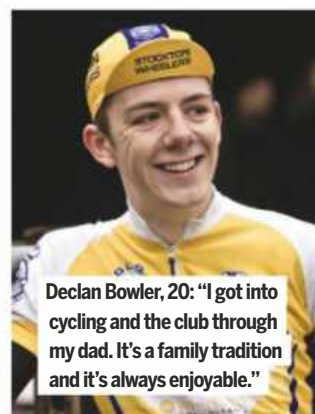


The club has a good age mix

## Meet the club



Alan Goodwin, 38: "There is a diversity of ages, abilities, activities and a strong social scene — but I'm social sec, so I would say that."



Declan Bowler, 20: "I got into cycling and the club through my dad. It's a family tradition and it's always enjoyable."



Doug Howes, 61: "In recent years the club has gone from a time trialling-only club to one that has diversified into all forms of cycling."



Paul Kitson, 50 "I've been a member since 1982 and since then the amount of members and activities has rocketed."

event will inspire many in the Teesside area to ride; it is also why the velodrome is deemed so important. As such, the club has set about getting as many coaches qualified for the track as possible.

When *CW* visits, Curran is spearheading a team pursuit formation going in and out of cones to coach bike-handling skills. On the road, as we wind our way through and out of Carlton-in-Cleveland, the older members can't resist

a glance at a roadside pub.

"They like stopping for a mid-way pint," Goodwin laughs. Someone responds: "It's like the steerer's default setting... We can't help it."

The affection for the club from its members is tangible. There's a very real excitement about the Nationals visiting the region, as well as the velodrome. After all the area's economic woes, they can't believe their good fortune.

But it is long overdue. This is a club that deserves the opportunities it is being with; the Stockton Wheelers has created a vibrant community of passionate cyclists from toddlers to pensioners, supporting them in whatever they wish to get out of cycling.

More people in the North-East should take advantage of this innovative and progressive club that still retains its traditional values. ■



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# Buttertubs Pass

Hawes, Yorkshire Dales

Simon Warren

**B**oth sides of Buttertubs are awesome to ride. I prefer the north face as it packs in a bit more variety, but it's the south side featured here that's now famous. The one image that sums up the massive success of the 2014 Grand Départ is the shot taken at the steep point of the climb, the landscape covered in a sea of humanity, divided by the peloton.

Start the climb from Hawes, head across the River Ure, up to Bellow Hill, then left onto the

climb itself. The tougher slopes lie towards the bottom and up through Simonstone it gets harder and harder.

Ahead you'll catch sight of giant mounds flanking the road, the scene for that famous photograph; the steepest gradient is here.

Through the gap and the worst is behind you. It's still three kilometres to the top but it becomes incrementally easier. The upper slopes take you across some beautiful scenery but beware the weather closing in as there's no shelter — none at all.

<b>6km</b>	<b>526m</b>	<b>302m</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>17%</b>
Length	Summit height	Height gain	Average gradient	Max gradient



Strava File [www.strava.com/segments/5066439](http://www.strava.com/segments/5066439)



Photo: Rick Robson



## The stats

**WHERE** Head north out of Hawes on Brunt Acres Road up to the T-junction at Bellow Hill. Take a left, then the next right towards Simonstone.

**KOM Top Tip** Put in some effort in early on; it's much easier later on so you can recover.



Ordnance Survey mapping © Crown copyright. AM46/13. Created with Memory-Map

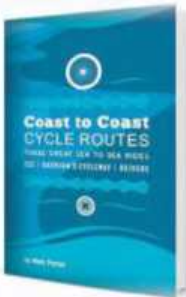


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by Mark Porter £11.99



Coast to Coast Cycle Routes is THE practical guide to crossing Britain. From West to East and East to West three different ways, following Britain's three most popular coast to coasters: the C2C, Hadrian's Cycleway and the Reivers. *Paperback*

## Le Tour de France 2015

The Official Review £20.00



From the Grand Depart to the cobbles of Nothern France and the majestic Alps and Pyrenees, 2015 provided non-stop excitement and spectacle. This official review captures in detail the gripping battles, and drama, through stunning photography and detailed reports. *Hardback*

## Feed Zone Portables

by Biju Thomas & Allen Lim £17.95



**A Cookbook of On-The-Go Food for Athletes**  
New cookbook Feed ZonePortables, Chef Biju and Dr. Lim offer 75 all-new portable food recipes for cyclists, runners, triathletes, mountainbikers, climbers, hikers, and backpackers. *Hardback*

## Goggles & Dust

The Horton Collection £11.99



The Horton Collection, Images from Cycling's Glory Days & Dust collects over 100stunning photographs hey day. Spanning the 1920s and '30s, the grit and determination of the bicycle racing pioneers who established the records of Europe's most hallowed races. *Hardback*

## This Island Race

by Rouleur £45.00



Rouleur set out to explore - to celebrate cycle racing in this country and to toast the people who make it happen - from the smallest of time trials to the invasion of the Grand Tours, Rouleur have captured a unique picture of a year in bike racing. *Hardback*

## Keep Calm and Pedal On

£9.99



In the never ending streams of traffic and the choking fumes of pollution this book gives the average cycle enthusiast or, indeed novice, a collection of quotes, sayings and proverbs on even more reasons why one should get on their bike. In the format of the bestselling Keep Calm and Carry On, Keep Calm and Pedal On is the perfect gift for keen bikers. *Hardback*

## Legends of the Tour

Foreword by Phil Liggett £20.00



A dynamic and insightful portrait of the world's most famous cycling race, Tour de France. A selection of international cycling writers share their views on the courses, rivalries, its crop of great riders from the young climber to legendary riders. *Hardback*

## Infographic Guide to Cycling

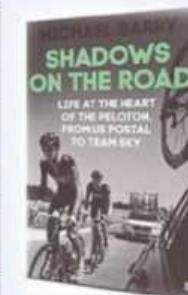
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A fun illustrated guide to the world of cycling and all things bike-related. This beautifully designed book presents cycling in a way you've never seen before. Mixing cycling facts with expert bike tech advice, this book features a unique and intriguing overview of the realm of the velocipede *Hardback*

## Shadows on the Road

by Michael Barry £17.99



Michael Barry explores what it was like to ride as a teammate alongside such giants of the sport as Lance Armstrong, Mark Cavendish, Bradley Wiggins and Chris Froome. *Hardback*

## The Pain Free Cyclist

Foreword by Bradley Wiggins £16.99



It's not (just) about the bike. Ride your bike long enough and you're likely to get injured! This book takes you through the most common cycling injuries, what they are, why you get them and what you can do to do get rid of them and get you back riding pain free. *Paperback*

## Personal Best

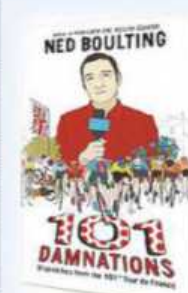
by Beryl Burton £19.95



The autobiography of Beryl Burton, Personal Best is a remarkable story of determination in the face of illness, courage in her long but lonely pre-eminence and above all, of never, ever giving less than her best. *Hardback*

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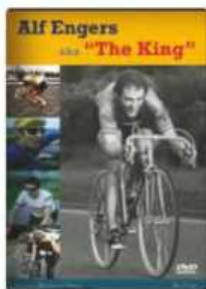
by Ned Boulting £14.99



Dispatches from the 101st Tour de France, 101 Damnations is a chance to relive the 2014 race, stage for stage, fall after fall, tantrum by tantrum; just the good bits mind, without all the aerial shots of castles. Or sunflowers. *Hardback*

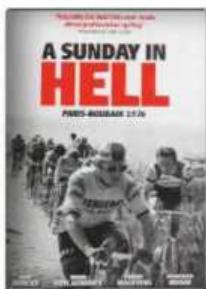


## Alf Engers A.K.A. The King £19.99



Packed with rare film footage of the time, extended interviews with Engers today, this film gives us an unforgettable portrait of a great rider, and of a vanished era in the sport of time-trialling. For those with memories of those years, and for all those who care about the history of Cycle Sport, this film is a must.

## A Sunday In Hell £19.99



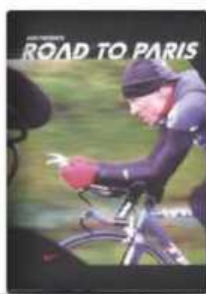
1976 Paris- Roubaix A psychological and dramatic study of the battle between some of the greatest legends of the sport. Eddy Merckx, Roger De Vlaeminck, Freddy Maertens and Francesco Moser all participated in the 1976 Paris-Roubaix, but the star of the film is the race itself.

## Battle of the Bikes/ On Yer Bike £19.99



**Battle of the Bikes** examines Graeme Obree, who built his own bike out of washing machine parts and rode it in his own unique crouched position to become the World Hour Record holder. **On Yer Bike** is an intimate portrait of Obree from an amateur cyclist to World Hour Record holder.

## Road To Paris £19.99



Documentary that covers Lance Armstrong and the 2001 US Postal Service Team over the course of 27 days in April as they prepare to win a third consecutive TDF. Neverbeforeseen footage takes you inside team meetings and in the team car during cycling's greatest races, including a down to- the wire Amstel Gold and the hellish Paris-Roubaix.

## Racing Is My Life £18.99



The Beryl Burton story Racing is Life... anything else before or after is just waiting', Steve McQueen from the film 'Le mans'. A quote that sums up Beryl Burton, the Yorkshire housewife, who despite a severe illness in childhood, became a cycling phenomenon, the most successful British female cyclist ever.

## Stars and Watercarriers/ The Impossible Hour £22.49



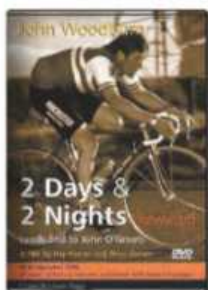
**Stars & Watercarriers:** 1973 Giro d'Italia. Considered one of the best films ever made on professional cycling. **The Impossible Hour:** Follow Eddy Merckx and Ole Ritter's race for the hour record.

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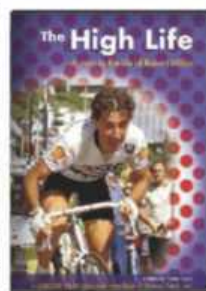
Chris Boardman's Quest for the World Hour Record This moving and intimate film tells the story of Chris Boardman's attempt at a new hour record. The cameras follow him all the way to the decisive day in October 2000 at Manchester's velodrome.

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1 day, 21 hours, 3 minutes and 16 seconds... That's how long it took John Woodburn to ride the 848 miles from Lands End to John O'Groats. He broke the record by 96 minutes. This record attempt, filmed in 1982 will long be remembered as a ride which placed John among the greats of long distance time trialling.

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# Lansley's South of England champ

Snowdon Sports

**A**drian Lansley retained his South of England Cyclo-cross Championship title at Middlemoor Waterpark in Bridgwater on Sunday.

The PedalOn rider first won the championship in 2006 but then didn't enjoy success again until last year.

Now 38, Lansley saw off the challenge of Scott Chalmers (Felt Racing) and Neil Ellison (West Drayton MBC) to retain top spot, while the women's title went to North Hampshire Road Club's Sarah Barber.

In the North of England Championship event at Heaton Park in Manchester, Hope Factory Racing's Jack Clarkson took a narrow win after fighting off a late surge from NFTO's Ian Bibby, with Clarkson's team-mate Paul Oldham taking third. Amira Mellor (Oldfield-Paul Milnes) won the women's title.

Olympian Liam Killeen took a comfortable win in the

Midlands title at Newport in Shropshire from Sleaford Wheelers' George Thompson, while Evie Richards (T-Mo Racing) was crowned women's champion.

Monmouth rider Steven Roach (Raleigh-GAC) took victory in the Welsh Championship at Colwyn Bay, while Dylan Kerfoot-Robson (Mountain Trax) was second and Sarah Barnwell (Birkenhead North End CC) was a narrow winner of the women's title.

After three months out of action following a broken collarbone, Alex Paton (Pedal Heaven RT) was back to form as he stormed to victory in the East and South East Championship at the Redbridge, Essex. It was the 25-year-old's second win of the weekend following victory in Saturday's East Kent League event.

Michael Butler (Hargroves Cycles) took third, while the women's title went to Sophie Wright (Renvale RT).

**Under-16 boys:** Callum Macleod (Palmer Park Velo)  
**Under-16 girls:** Alderney Baker (Corley Cycles-Drops RT).

**Welsh Championships (Eirias Park, Colwyn Bay):**

**Senior men:** 1. Steven Roach (Raleigh GAC) 1:03.45; 2. D. Kerfoot-Robson (Mountain Trax RT) +3.36; 3. L. Williams (Bikesoup Test Team) +4.05; 4. J. Phelps (Muddybumbikes) +5.23; 5. L. Hobbs (Forza Cycles) +7.30; 6. A. Peall (Forza Cycles) +one lap; 7. R. Rogers (Marsh Tracks RT); 8. M. Gilbert (Wrexham RC); 9. C. Roberts (Hafren CC); 10. G. Evans (Wrexham RC).  
**Women:** 1. Sarah Barnwell (Clwb Beicio Mynydd); 2. J. Burthem (VC Melyd) +0.09; 3. M. Backstedt (Maindy Flyers VCC).  
**Veterans 40-49:** Andrew Parry (Urban Cyclery)  
**Veterans over-50:** Phil Roach (Team Jewson MI Racing).  
**Juniors:** Joe Barnwell (Marsh Tracks RT)  
**Under-16 boys:** Craig Rogers (Birkenhead North End CC).



Junior winner Ben Turner at Heaton Park, Manchester

Photo: Russ Ellis

**Under-16 girls:** Nicole Clarke (Birkenhead North End CC).

**North of England Championships (Heaton Park, Manchester):**

**Senior men:** Jack Clarkson (Hope Factory Racing) 1:02.00; 2. I. Bibby (NFTO Pro Cycling) +0.06; 3. P. Oldham (Hope Factory Racing) +1.11; 4. G. Drake (Leisure Lakes Bikes) +1.44; 5. N. Barnes (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley) +1.48; 6. N. Craig (Scott Racing) +1.53; 7. B. Harding (Oldfield-Paul Milnes Cycles) +3.50; 8. J. Humphreys (Wheelbase Altura) +3.55; 9. T. Craig (Scott Racing) +4.25; 10. I. Paton (Team Wiggins) +6.27.  
**Women:** 1. Amira Mellor (Oldfield-Paul Milnes Cycles) 35.00; 2. S. Thackray (Oldfield-Paul Milnes) +2.20; 3. R. Preece (Red Rose Olympic) +2.45.  
**Veterans 40-49:** Ian Taylor (Cand N Cycles)  
**Veterans over-50:** Chris Young (Pedalsport CC)  
**Juniors:** Ben Turner (Oldfield-Paul Milnes Cycles)  
**Under-16 boys:** Lewis Hartley (Inspire VCUK RT)  
**Under-16 girls:** Kim Baptista (Nutracker Racing)

**Scottish Championships (Irvine Beach, Ayrshire, Scotland):**

**Senior men:** 1. Grant Ferguson (Betch. NI-Superior-Brentjens RT) 48.15; 2. D. Lines (Velosure Starley Primal) +2.26; 3. R. Wardell (unattached) +3.23; 4. G. MacDonald (Hope Factory Racing) +3.40; 5. N. Walker (Hope Factory Racing) +4.23; 6. H. Johnston (Pro Vision Cycle Clothing) +4.42; 7. C. Magowan (Peebles CC) +5.46; 8. M. Nicolson (Dooleys Cycles.co.uk) +6.08; 9. A. Clark (Velocity 44 Stirling) +8.29; 10. R. Fenwick (Team Moda-Anon) +8.58.  
**Senior women:** 1. Lucy Grant (Peebles CC) 46:56; 2. A. Ewing (WV Breda) +1.24; 3. J. Barr (Velocity 44 Stirling) +1.27.  
**Junior men:** John MacLeod (Spokes Racing Team)  
**Junior women:** Rhona Callander (Stirling Bike Club)  
**Veterans 40-49:** Gary McCrae (Leslie Bike Shop)  
**Veterans women:** Janet Erskine (Ayr Roads CC)  
**Veterans 50:** Kenny Kentley (Velocity 44 Stirling)  
**Veterans 50 women:** Elizabeth Clayton (Stirling BC)  
**Veterans 60:** Alexander McAllister (Ayr Roads CC)  
**Under-16 boys:** Cameron Mason (Leslie Bike Shop)  
**Under-16 girls:** Anna McGorum (Peebles CC)

**Midland Championships/BWA West Midlands League Round 11 (Newport, Shropshire):**

**Senior:** 1. Liam Killeen (unattached) 57.27; 2. G. Thompson (Sleaford Wheelers) +2.50; 3. J. Harper (Mansfield RC) +3.09; 4. B. Wadey (Clee Cycles) +3.13; 5. D. Atkins (Ride Coventry) +4.00; 6. T. Payton (Islabikes) +4.12; 7. A. Naylor (Fossa Racing) +5.12; 8. C. Sturgeon (Jewson) +6.04; 9. J. Hicks (Rugby Velo) +1lap; 10. J. Garrett (Rugby Velo).  
**Women:** 1. Evie Richards (T-MO Racing) 41.57; 2. H. Payton (Corley Cycles) +1.31; 3. D. Lee (Mulebar) +4.12.  
**Under-23s:** George Thompson

## Rider of the week Jack Clarkson (Hope Factory Racing)

### North of England Championships

The Halifax rider took victory in a competitive field for the race at Heaton Park in Manchester, holding off NFTO pro Ian Bibby in a dramatic finish.

**Veterans 40-49:** Darren Atkins (Ride Coventry)

**Veterans over 50:** Tim Gould (Zepnat)

**Junior:** Cameron Orr (Sherwood Pines)

**Under-16 boys:** Lewis Askey (Lichfield City CC)

**Under-16 girls:** Harriet Harnden (Malvern Cyclesport).

**East and South East Championship (Redbridge circuit, Essex):**

**Senior men:** 1. Alex Paton (Pedal Heaven RT) 57.58; 2. H. Robinson (Neon Velo) +1.02; 3. M. Butler (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley) +2.03; 4. G. Martin (XRT Elmy Cycles) +3.00; 5. J. Dennis (Hackney GT) +3.39; 6. M. Holmes (Arctic Tactx RT) +4.12; 7. R. Tricker (Vicious Velo) +4.47; 8. C. Ansell (Team Corridor) +5.07; 9. J. Waddington (Dulwich Paragon CC) +6.04; 10. J. Madgwick (Hackney GT) +6.13.  
**Senior women:** 1. Sophie Wright (Renvale RT) 39.06; 2. E. Wadsworth (Beeline-Gener8) +0.53; 3. L. Mahe (IKON-Mazda) +4.23.  
**Veterans 40-49:** Shaun Aldous (Renvale RT)  
**Veterans over-50:** Michael Bell (London Fire Brigade CC)  
**Juniors:** Tom Easley (Crawley Wh)  
**Under-16 boys:** Ben Tulett (Beeline-Gener8)  
**Under-16 girls:** Elspeth Grace (Welwyn Wh)

## Road racing

**Saturday, December 5**

**Odd Down Winter Series, round one (Odd Down circuit, Bath):**

**2, 3:** 1. Rhys Williams (Zappi's RT); 2. L. Bromiley (Univ of Bath CC); 3. G. Turner (Univ of Bath CC); 4. J. Russell (TIDiabetes.info); 5. R. Witchell (Univ of Bristol CC); 6. S. Barnett (VC Walcot); 7. H. Burton (Bath CC); 8. J. Bevan (Army CU); 9. I. Palmer (Twickenham CC); 10. I. Cade (Cadence RT).  
**4th Cat:** Miles Burton (Bath CC)  
**Women:** Kate Baker (Performance Cycles)

## Cyclo-cross

**Sunday, December 6**

**South of England Championships (Middlemoor, Bridgwater):**

**Senior men:** Adrian Lansley (PedalOn) 56.12; 2. S. Chalmers (Felt Racing) +0.47; 3. N. Ellison (West Drayton MBC) +1.05; 4. K. Norfolk (PedalOn) +1.54; 5. L. Holmes (unattached) +2.25; 6. E. Oliver-Evans (Cyclo-cross Magazine) +3.22; 7. D. Hall (unattached) +3.31; 8. M. Loake (Southfork Racing) +4.51; 9. J. Linden (Royal Dean Forest CC) +4.58; 10. T. Budden (Sotonia CC) +5.58.  
**Women:** 1. Sarah Barber (North Hampshire RC) 46.12; 2. F. Dannah (unattached) +2.09; 3. C. Kilburn (unattached) +1 lap.  
**Juniors:** Matt Fratesi (Severn RC)  
**Veterans 40-49:** Chris Rathbone (Somerset RC)  
**Veterans over-50:** Steven Davies (Hargroves Cycles-Ridley)

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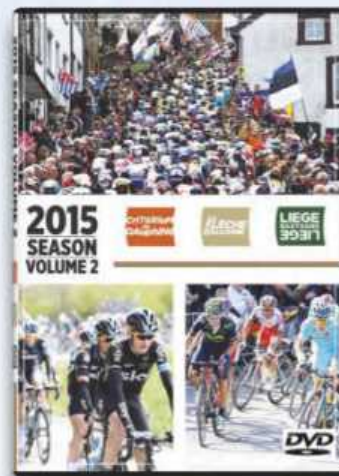
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# Dr Hutch

One of the drawbacks of being a sponsored rider is that friends tap you up for freebies, says the Doc

doctorhutch\_cycling@timeinc.com



**I** was out for a ride with my friend Bernard recently. For no obvious reason, he started telling me that he wanted to buy a mountain bike. I was surprised, since, in the 'World of Cycling According to Bernard', mountain bikes occupy a space on the spectrum of bicycling evil between the council highway department employee who's decided you could fix a pothole by painting a ring around it, and the thief who stole his Raleigh Chopper from outside a newsagent's in 1978.

"I think the red colourway looks better," he drivelled on. "With the upgraded wheel option. I'll need to upgrade the tyres, but we can sort that out later. Size medium." There was a pause while I contemplated the degree of detail; I realised he was placing an order.

It's not the first time. For several years I was a sponsored, full-time bike racer. It was a position that

carried with it many privileges: an opportunity to try to reach my full potential, to do some big races, to walk past dejectedly in the background of a TV shot while some famous rider was doing his victory interview with Jill Douglas.

My friend couldn't have cared a

fig for any of my personal fulfilment or glory; all he was interested in was the possibility that I might be a source of discount bikes.

I made one of the biggest mistakes of my career early on. At the end of one sponsorship deal I ended up with a bike that I couldn't use the following year due to a change of equipment supplier. I gave it to Bernard. "I don't like the colour," he said, as he hung it up in his garage. "But it'll have to do." I thought he was joking.

## Not going back

At the next change of supplier, he'd arrived at my house to "collect his bike". I'd explained that this time they were all being returned, as specified in that year's contract. "Just don't give them back," he

## Acts of Cycling Stupidity

Word reaches us via Twitter (@doctor\_hutch) of a friend of a friend who was riding home from the local bike shop. His purchase had been a new helmet, which I'm sure we're all relieved to hear that he was wearing.

The box in which the helmet had been contained was in a plastic bag, which was swinging from the bars of our friend of a friend's bike. (You can probably see where this is going.)

The box got caught up in the spokes of the front wheel, jammed behind the fork, and caused the rider to fall. Wrecking, in the process, the helmet that had been the cause of the crash in the first place.

Photos: Chris Catchpole



Once the 'free' bike genie is released it is difficult to put back



said. "They'll never notice. I'm going to take this time trial bike, unless you have it in red?"

In his defence, not giving things back has worked well for Bernard over the years. But clearly he can only borrow and then fail to return things that I already own. Even Bernard doesn't expect me to order new products specifically so he can steal them.

At least that's what I thought. "Can you get me a cyclo-cross bike?" he asked. As it happened, I could get him a model from the previous year, so I ordered it at a discount of about 40 per cent. When it arrived and I took it round to his house. "I'll pay you tomorrow," he said. The following day he presented me with an envelope containing a solitary £10 note.

"That's odd," he said. "There was £700 in there this morning, I could have sworn. I wonder where it went? Well, cheerio old chum, I'll drop it round if it shows up."

He claimed to have paid for a similar purchase with a cash transfer via the website 'payyourmates.com'. It was apparently just like PayPal, with the trivial difference that PayPal actually exists.

Back in the present day, I explained that the sponsorship arrangements of which he was so fond had come to an end.

"So you can't get free stuff any more?" he said.

I could have pointed out the difference between 'free' and 'discounted', but I just said, "No."

"Wow," he said. "That might put a strain on our relationship."

## How to... run

Winter editions of cycling magazines used to be full of running advice, on the basis that it was good 'cross-training'. (Cross-training was the once fashionable idea that training at one sport might make you better at another sport, and was so named because it never worked and made people very angry.)

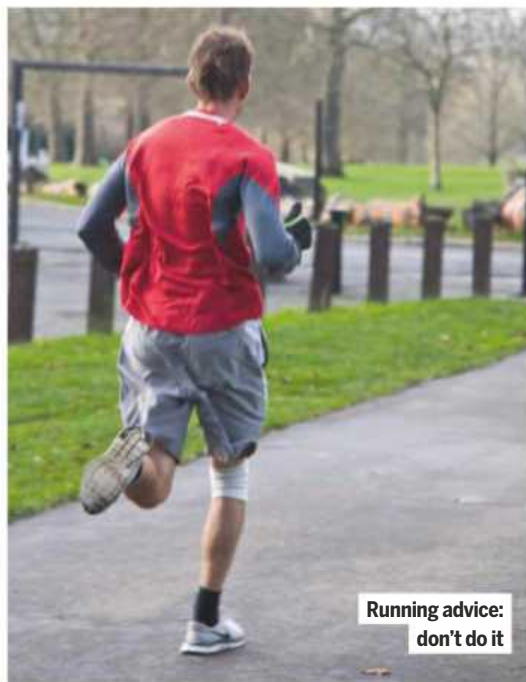
Then cyclo-cross became a big deal. Since the running advice might finally have proved useful for something other than causing tendonitis, it was eliminated from the magazines.

Running is much more complicated than cycling. In cycling your feet are attached to the pedals, so they can only move in one dimension. In running your feet can go anywhere, and they will. This doubles the number of ways to fall over, since you can now do backwards and forwards as well as to each side.

Running makes your legs hurt a very great deal. Running enthusiasts will try to tell you that this effect fades with further running. They are lying. They are just embittered that they fell for this when they took up running, and are taking revenge on other people.

Running is really, really slow. If you live somewhere flat you can run for 10 minutes and still be able to see your house. This slowness cuts down the options for where you can do it. In the length of time that you could have explored 20 miles of wonderful countryside on a bike, you'll be able to run to the end of the road and back.

Finally, if you start running, there is a danger you'll end up in something called a 'triathlon'. And trust me, unless you really want to wear a rubber suit in public, you don't want that.



Running advice:  
don't do it



Staying power: Herne Hill's got enduring appeal

# Herne Hill Velodrome

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**T**his open air track, just off Burgage Road in Dulwich, South London, has sung to the sound of the silk tyres of Olympic, world and national champions for well over 100 years. Built in 1891, it is the only remaining facility from the 1948 London Olympic Games and is now enjoying a new lease of life with a new surface, safety fence and floodlighting.

The 450m concrete track is in such demand that riders are regularly turned away from Saturday morning training sessions due to the sheer numbers wanting to ride on one of the world's most historic tracks.

George Lacey Hillier, an amateur racer in the days of penny-farthings who later became a journalist and a writer (one of Hillier's many books basks under the splendid title of *Wrinkles for Cyclists*,

wrinkles being a Victorian term for tactics) was the man behind the building of Herne Hill.

W. J. Peacock Building Company constructed the original velodrome with packed red shale. This surface was replaced with wooden slats in 1893, and then concrete in 1896, which turned Herne Hill into a record-breaking track.

Racers in those days were divided, like greyhounds are, into sprinters and stayers, and it was the stayers who proved most popular around Herne Hill's wide, shallow bankings. At 24-hour races like the Cuca Cocoa Cup, crowds of over 10,000 people were the norm.

## Concrete legacy

In 1936 Ernie Mills and Bill Paul of the Addiscombe Cycling Club set a tandem World Hour record of 30 miles and 793 yards. It was a superb performance that inspired *Cycling* magazine, the grandfather of *Cycling Weekly*, to raise money for Mills and Paul to travel to the Velodromo Vigorelli in Milan to see how far they could ride on a much faster track. In October 1937 they set a record

in Milan of 31 miles, 113 yards that lasted until the year 2000.

Herne Hill had its longest association with the Good Friday Meeting, which was first held in 1903. These meetings attracted huge crowds that came to watch the world's best track racers in events like the Champion of Champions sprint and the Golden Wheel. The meeting was cancelled due to deterioration of the track in 2010 and has now moved indoors, and north of the Thames, to the Lee Valley Velopark.

Herne Hill Velodrome became an Olympic venue for track cycling in the 1948 London Olympic Games due to being in situ. The Austerity Games — as they were called — were born out of the post-war era and economic slump, when existing facilities were a boon.

Britain won two silver and two bronze medals in the four track events, the two silvers being won by Reg Harris. Decades later, a young Bradley Wiggins followed in his wheeltracks around HHV. Going by current use, it's only a matter of time before another star in the making starts their career at this legendary velodrome.



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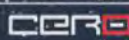


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